Local Responses to Homelessness:

A Planning Guide for BC Communities

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security

Ministry of Municipal Affairs

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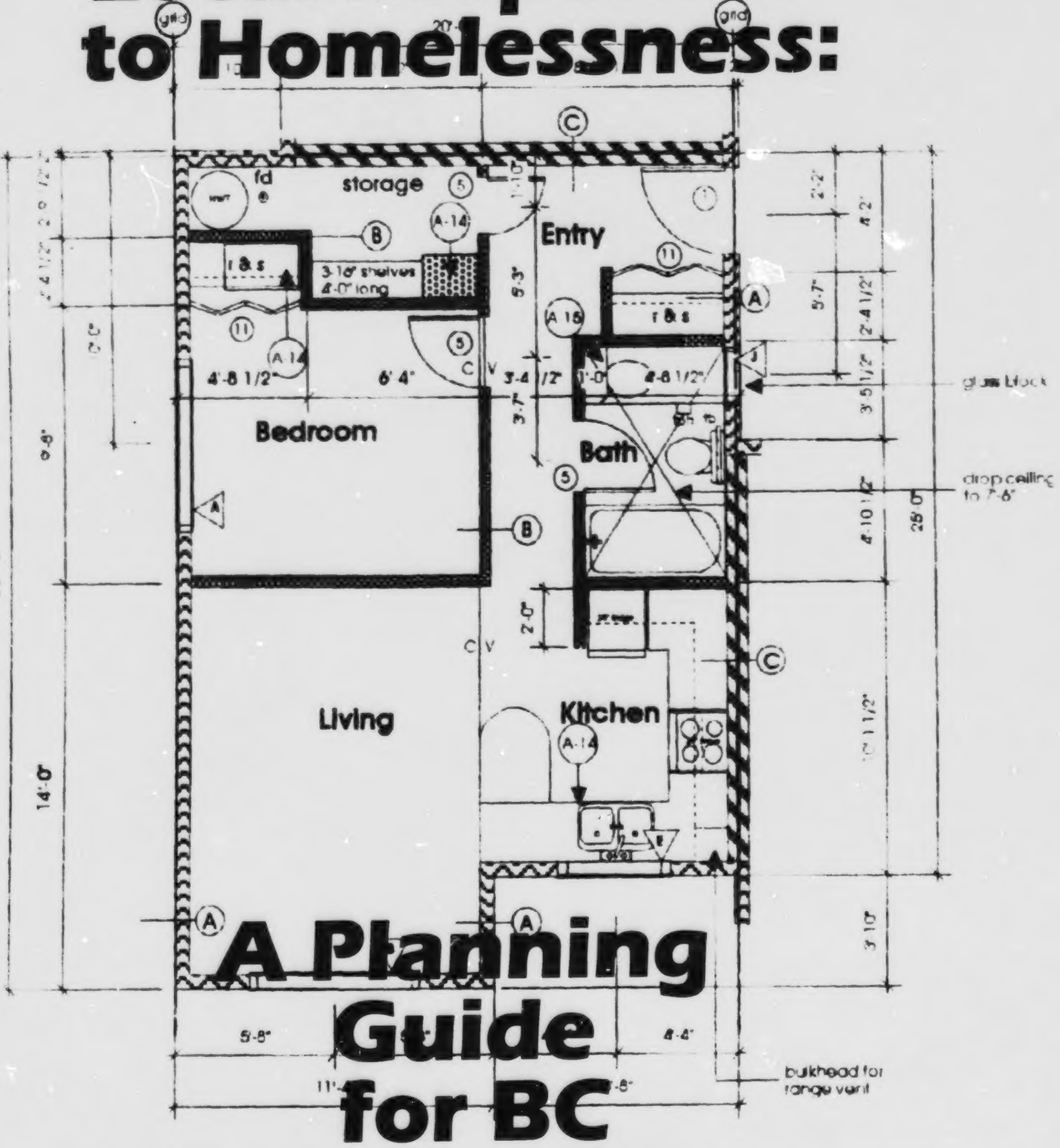
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A Planning Guide for BC Communities

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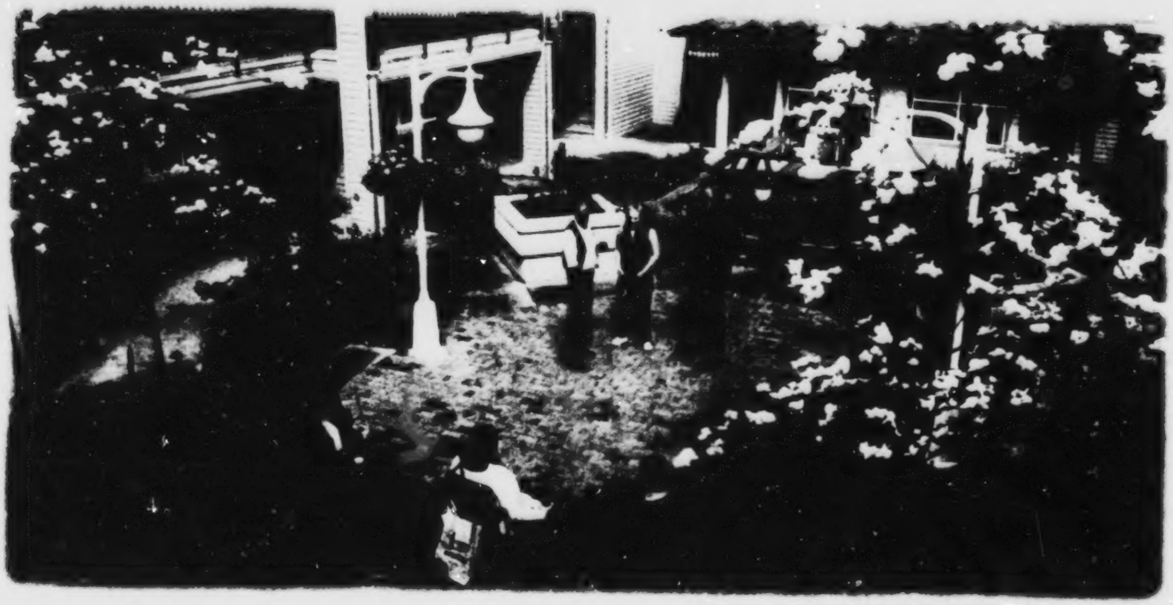
1 Introduction



Homelessness is an issue of growing concern to many British Columbians.

Although it isn't a new problem, some communities in B.C. are noticing homelessness for the first time. This guide has been developed to help address the complex housing needs of communities and the people within them who are homeless or on the verge of becoming homeless.

Case studies and examples in the guide illustrate the joint efforts of community groups and agencies, all levels of government, health authorities, private business and labour unions in reducing homelessness.

1.1 What's in this guide?

The guide is divided into six main sections.

Section 1 sets out the purpose of this guide and provides highlights of the contents.

Section 2 is an overview of homelessness in B.C. stating that there are people living outdoors or on the street in communities throughout British Columbia. There are also people who are at risk of becoming homeless.

Three specific problems produce a population at risk of becoming homeless:

- An inadequate supply of affordable and appropriate housing
- Insufficient income (employment or income support)
- Lack of appropriate support services for those who need them

The lack of one or any combination of these three can lead to homelessness.

Section 3 describes the roles of federal and provincial governments, and the challenges facing local governments, health authorities and community agencies in addressing homelessness.

Health authorities play a vital role in addressing homelessness by funding support services for individuals with complex health and social needs.

Examples and case studies throughout this guide illustrate a variety of ways that health authorities have contributed to the overall success of projects that reduce homelessness.

Section 4 outlines five ways to understand homelessness that include:

- Reviewing existing data
- Counting homeless individuals who are not in shelters
- Learning more about individuals who use shelters
- Learning more about individuals most at risk of homelessness
- Learning more about housing in your community

This section concludes with a checklist of steps for collecting data that will help to improve understanding of homelessness in your community.

> *"... examples, case studies, key tools and strategies"*

Section 5 describes in detail, using examples and case studies, key tools and strategies available to local governments, community agencies and health authorities to address homelessness.

Many local governments in B.C. are currently using a range of tools and resources to address homelessness. These include standards of maintenance bylaws, secondary suite policies and conversion control bylaws that help preserve and maintain existing affordable rental housing.

Examples and case studies illustrate additional roles for local governments: contributing funding, donating buildings, providing strong council and staff support, initiating ideas, and assisting with the organization and administration of initiatives.

Section 6 provides a synopsis of lessons learned from the case studies and things to think about when considering local solutions to reduce homelessness.

Appendix A provides descriptions of successful projects and contact information. Additional appendices provide checklists and other resources.

1.2 Highlights

The following are highlights of community responses to homelessness presented in this guide.

Community Involvement

Individuals and organizations with diverse interests often work together to find solutions to common concerns. The best solutions are built locally by people who take a long-term interest in addressing challenges in their community. The success of some projects showcased in this guide is the result of:

- A combination of strong community and local government support together with provincial government funding
- Community input and involvement
- Involving neighbours, especially in exterior building design
- Seeing potential tenants as having skills and assets, not just needs
- Building trust among potential neighbours, potential tenants and community agencies

Assessing factors contributing to homelessness

The factors contributing to homelessness are different for every person, and for every community. In Nelson, a coalition of agencies developed a needs assessment that identified a diverse list of reasons why people lost their housing:

- Families evicted
- Individuals out of hospital with no support network
- Individuals with chronic mental illness discharged from the regional psychiatric ward
- Out-of-town patients waiting for day surgery at the regional hospital
- Individuals or families who lost their homes due to vandalism or fire
- Youth and adults leaving abusive homes or relationships

The Nelson coalition found it needed to clearly identify local reasons before developing solutions.

Project planning and development

Building any form of housing is a complex and time consuming process, requiring the involvement of a number of experts. Community groups and local governments have been most successful in preserving or developing housing for individuals and families at risk of homelessness by:

- Setting realistic goals, and being persistent in achieving these goals
- Having a flexible approach - trying different solutions to address issues

In developing programs, many groups have found a successful strategy is to make services fit the people instead of people fit the services.

Emergency shelters

Providing emergency shelter can be an important element of an overall response to homelessness. This guide provides examples of a variety of shelters that serve different groups of people including: shelters for individuals who are chronically homeless, minimal barrier shelters, and shelters for women and youth.

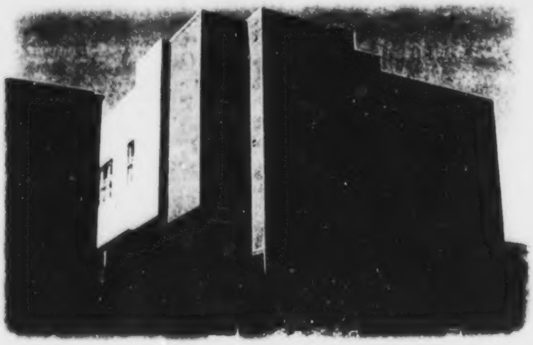
In addition to provincial funding for shelters, important contributions are made by local governments, health authorities and community groups in the provision of emergency shelters. Local governments can assist in the location of shelters through inclusive zoning. Health authorities often provide services to people in need of emergency shelter. Community groups advocate for the continuum of housing options which range from emergency shelter to supportive housing to independent living. Community groups often serve as a catalyst in bringing all the partners together.

Over-emphasizing this approach can lead to a situation of addressing short-term needs at the expense of long-term solutions, and may not be cost effective in the long run.

Innovative development agreements

Some developments succeed thanks to partners coming together in new ways.

The Edge is a mixed income housing development in Vancouver with rental and strata-titled units. This example shows how new, low-rent housing can be developed with no capital grants or operating subsidies from any level of government. As part of the rezoning of industrial land to allow the 150 live/work units, the developers entered into a housing agreement with the City of Vancouver, through which they provided 22 rental units to the City at no cost. The City purchased an additional eight units. Their costs will be recovered through the rent income from all of the City's units. Once the mortgage is paid, rental income will add to the City's Affordable Housing Fund, to be used for other projects. This is a mechanism to provide publicly-owned housing in perpetuity with no public subsidy.



Supportive housing

Individuals often stabilize their lives and re-establish connections with the community when personal support services are combined with housing. The Portland Hotel Society case study illustrates an approach to providing supportive housing. The society is committed to helping tenants maintain their housing and offering support services that tenants may not have been able to benefit from in the past.

The case study shows the supportive environment is enhanced by staff who have extensive training and development.

Avoiding homelessness

Many community agencies throughout North America have been successful in helping people to avoid becoming homeless by helping them stay in their homes. Some strategies illustrated in the guide include:

- Informing tenants of their rights and obligations
- Helping tenants negotiate with landlords or mediate a settlement
- Providing tenants with a loan or grant to pay arrears
- Linking tenants with services to help them find other accommodation

Breaking the cycle of homelessness

For some people, affordable housing is not sufficient to break the cycle of homelessness. They require a more comprehensive approach that involves addressing some of the underlying issues related to homelessness, such as the need for appropriate housing, support services, and employment opportunities.

The guide includes two case studies that reduce homelessness by taking a holistic approach. Central City Concern in Portland Oregon provides a continuum of services that link housing, drug and alcohol treatment, and job initiatives. Eva's Phoenix in Toronto works with many partners to help homeless youth by providing transition housing, employment training, and the development of life skills.

2 Homelessness in B.C. - A Growing Problem

2.1 What do we mean by homelessness?

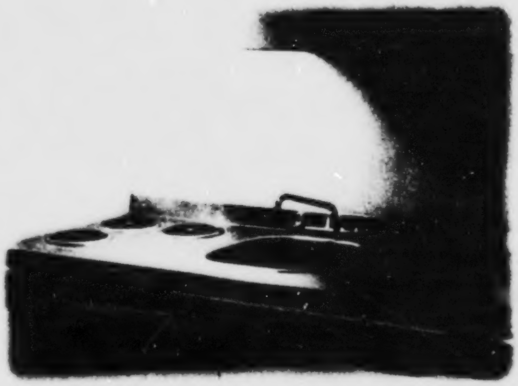
Two distinct groups of individuals are the focus of this planning guide:

- People who are absolutely homeless
- People who are at risk of becoming homeless

The United Nations refers to homelessness in terms of absolute and relative. People who are absolutely homeless are living outdoors – on the street, in parks, under bridges – and are literally without shelter. The term absolute homeless also refers to people who rely on emergency shelters and hostels for temporary accommodation.

People who are relatively homeless are considered at risk of homelessness because they are paying too much of their income for rent and/or living in unsafe, inadequate or insecure housing. Often, people in these households are one step away from homelessness.

People renting hotel or motel rooms by the month, living in rooming houses or 'couch surfing' (temporarily staying with friends and family) are usually considered at risk of homelessness.



2.2 What causes homelessness?

The causes of homelessness have changed over time, just as the people who are homeless have changed. Prior to the 1980s, homelessness was seen to involve a small number of mainly middle-age males who were transient or disassociated from a family network. They could be found in the older skid row districts of Canada's cities. They were not absolutely homeless, as they relied on hotels, motels and rooming houses. During the early 1980s, however, more and more people of all ages became visibly homeless in most cities.

> *"... more people of all ages became visibly homeless"*

Housing and employment have changed dramatically since the 1970s. A significant restructuring of the labour market, an increased number of divorces and dramatically changing housing markets have contributed to increasing homelessness. These factors have created a general environment that is putting more people at risk of becoming homeless.

Factors that contribute to homelessness:

- Increasing poverty
- Insufficient supply of affordable housing
- Lack of community supports and discharge planning for people who have been deinstitutionalized or released from jail
- Breakdown of family and social networks
- Reliance on emergency and "survival" services rather than permanent housing solutions

Three specific problems produce a population at risk of homelessness:

- An inadequate supply of affordable and appropriate housing
- Insufficient income (employment or income support)
- Lack of appropriate support services for those who need them

The lack of one or any combination of these three creates the necessary pre-conditions for homelessness.

2.3 Absolute homelessness

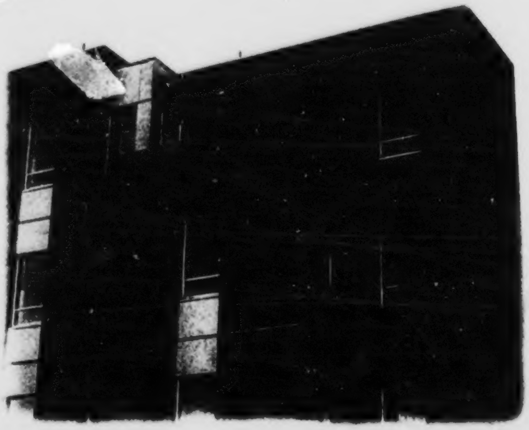
There is no reliable estimate of absolute homelessness in B.C., either provincially or regionally.

The City of Vancouver estimates there are 300 to 600 people in the City living without shelter at any one time. Another 300 to 400 individuals are staying in emergency shelters.

In the City of Victoria, it was found that a total of 2,050 different individuals used local shelters and hostels in 1997.

Emergency shelters have been opened in Prince George, Nanaimo and many other B.C. municipalities to respond to homelessness throughout the province.

A point in time snapshot was taken of shelter clients staying in B.C. emergency shelters and hostels on November 19, 1999 as part of a provincial government study on homelessness. It provided a picture of the people who stayed in shelters, not a count of homelessness per se.



The typical B.C. shelter client on November 19, 1999 was:

- Predominantly male (78%)
- Between the ages of 25 and 44 years old (52%) with an average age of 37 years
- Single (86%)
- Caucasian (66%)
- Homeless for less than 6 months (67%)

Most relied on income assistance (52%). Many were staying at the shelter because they were out of funds (24%). Almost a third had health problems linked to substance misuse. Some displayed visible signs of mental illness, or said they had a mental illness (22%).

More detailed information on B.C. shelter client characteristics as reported in the snapshot is found in Appendix B.

Organizations that run emergency shelters have noticed some trends:

- The number of persons with mental illness who are trying to use shelters is increasing. In Vancouver, two shelters funded by the Greater Vancouver Mental Health Services Society reported that between 1993 and 1997, the number of people with mental illness turned away from shelters had doubled
- More youth are using emergency shelters. A Vancouver youth shelter showed a 36% increase in the number of individual clients between the 1998 and 1999 fiscal years; in Victoria the number of homeless individuals using shelters grew rapidly in 1999 (24%)

2.4 People at risk of becoming homeless in B.C.

The number of people at risk of becoming homeless in B.C. is growing. Province-wide, people living in 115,000 tenant households – almost one quarter of all private tenant households – paid 50% or more of their income on shelter in 1996. If faced with unexpected expenses, people in these households may become homeless.

An additional 14,000 people live in residential hotels and motels and rooming houses, usually called SROs or Single Room Occupancies. Tenants often pay more than 50% of their income to rent, and they do not have cooking facilities or private bathrooms. While SRO tenants are provided security of tenure under the **Residential Tenancy Act**, many SRO hotels they use are disappearing.

The remainder of this section discusses rental housing available to individuals and families with low incomes.

2.4.1 Traditional rental housing

Traditional forms of rental housing are purpose-built rental apartment buildings and suites in houses (secondary suites). Most people paying more than 50% of income on shelter live in low rise apartments – apartment buildings that are four storeys or less.

The proportion of renter households who pay more than 50% of income for rent varies across the province. According to the 1996 Census, the highest proportion occured in McBride, where half of all renter households paid 50% or more of their income to rent in 1996. Slocan, Zeballos and Port Clements are among the dozen municipalities where no renters paid more than 50% of their income to rent. Province-wide, 24% of renters are at risk of homelessness because they spend more than half of their income to rent.

The number of renter households paying 50% or more of their income to rent is growing in most municipalities. Between 1991 and 1996 Abbotsford, Kamloops and Kelowna experienced rapid growth. In Abbotsford, the proportion of households at risk grew by 23%.

Appendix C shows the proportion of renter households paying 50% or more of their income to rent in 1996 in B.C. municipalities, as well as the change in proportion between 1991 and 1996.

In addition, an analysis of data provided by B.C. Housing showed that of 10,000 people on their active waiting list as of January 2000, just over half were paying 50% or more of their incomes to rent. These households, most of which are female-led and families with children, are at risk of homelessness.

2.4.2 Single room occupancy hotels

Many lower income individuals live in single-room occupancy (SRO) hotels, motels and rooming houses in major centres across the province.

An SRO hotel is a residential hotel, usually privately owned and operated, where rooms are rented by the week or month. Many were built in the 1920s or earlier, and are in poor condition. The rooms typically do not contain a bathroom, nor a kitchen, are roughly 10 ft. x 10 ft. and of poor quality. In the City of Vancouver, they are clustered in two areas: the Downtown Eastside and Downtown South. Other Lower Mainland municipalities with SRO hotels are New Westminster, Surrey and Burnaby.

SROs exist in B.C. municipalities from Port Alberni to Fort Nelson. Motels often serve a similar role in smaller communities, particularly in the winter months. This is a problem for tenants who may be evicted to make room for tourists in the summer.

The conversion of SRO hotels and motels to tourist use is one of the primary reasons why the stock is decreasing. A 1998 City of Vancouver study showed between June 1996 and August 1998, the SRO stock in Vancouver's downtown core decreased by 732 units – a net loss of 9.9%. More than three-quarters of the net loss was the result of the conversion of five large residential hotels to tourist use. Other reasons cited were redevelopment pressures, fire and closure due to physical deterioration.

Often when SRO hotels and motels close, relative homelessness reaches absolute.

The following table shows the number of SRO units in the province in 1998.

Table: SRO units in B.C., 1998

Location	Number of Units/Occupants
Vancouver	6,677
Elsewhere in Lower Mainland*	297
Victoria	174
Rest of B.C.	5,800 to 6,900
Total B.C.	13,000 to 14,000

*Burnaby, New Westminster, Surrey

Note: This does not include motel or rooming house units.

Based on a 1991 survey, tenants living in Vancouver SRO units were likely to be:

- male (82%)
- over age 55 (33%), followed by ages 15 to 35 (29%). The average age was 47 years
- living alone (85%)
- receiving income assistance (47%)

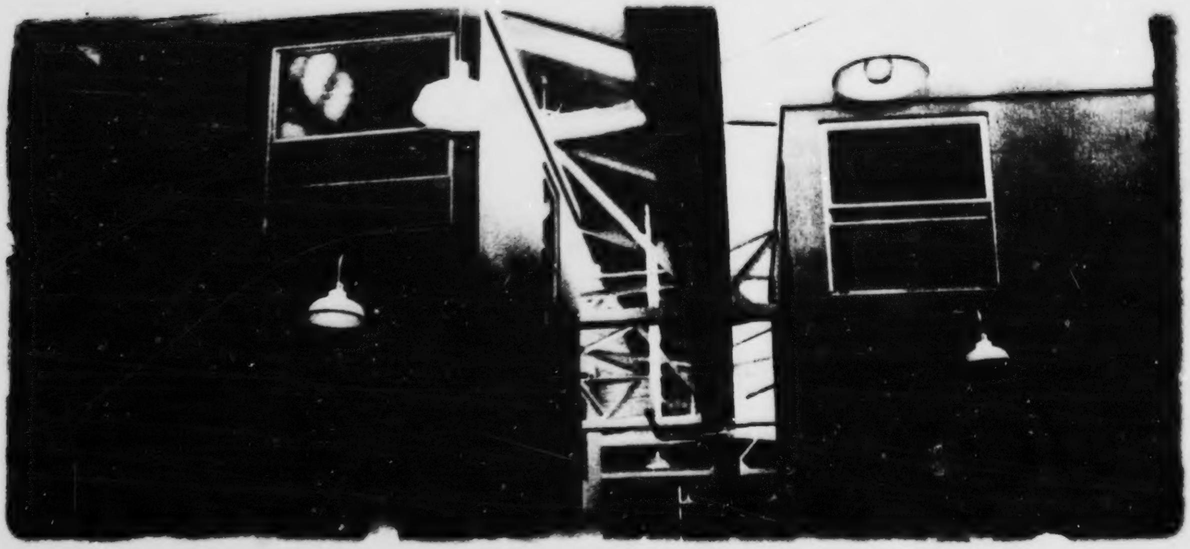
Most SRO tenants were in good health (43%), while 22% were hospitalized in the previous year and 39% had a physical disability.

2.4.3 Summary

People who are most likely to become homeless are people with very low incomes and who are spending more than 50% of their income to rent. There are individuals and families in almost every B.C. municipality with this severe affordability problem.

The majority of people who are at risk of homelessness live in lowrise apartments or suites in houses. Some live in SRO hotels, motels and rooming houses.

3 Homelessness in B.C. - Who's Doing What?



In many cases, effective responses to homelessness occur through partnerships of various levels of government and community agencies. Increasingly, health authorities are playing a role. In some cases the business sector and labour unions get involved. No one type of organization has the necessary resources, mandate and capacity to single-handedly respond to the complexities of homelessness.

3.1 The federal government

The federal government provides programs and assistance to address homelessness through two streams: its housing agency, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), and the homelessness initiative announced in December 1999.

3.1.1 CMHC

CMHC provides research and assistance for housing as part of its mandate to promote affordability and choice in housing for all Canadians. CMHC also provides operating subsidies under longstanding agreements. No new units have been developed under these agreements since 1994.

CMHC assistance, which directly addresses homelessness in B.C., includes the Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) and Homegrown Solutions.

Under Rental & Rooming House RRAP, the CMHC offers financial assistance, through forgivable loans, to bring properties up to minimum health and safety standards. It is expected that the quality of the repairs will extend the useful life of the dwellings by at least 15 years.

Many SRO units in B.C. have been upgraded with RRAP funds. The amount of assistance ranges from $12,000 per rooming house bed in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island to $18,000 in the far north. For other rental housing, it ranges from $18,000 per unit in the Lower Mainland and on Vancouver Island to $27,000 in the far north.

> "... CMHC funds demonstration projects"

Through Homegrown Solutions, CMHC funds demonstration projects to help house youth, Aboriginal people and individuals who are homeless, have disabilities or have a low income. This program is delivered by the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association (CHRA).

As part of its research program, CMHC published **Documentation of Best Practices Addressing Homelessness** in 1999. This 150-page book reports on how ten agencies across Canada work to reduce homelessness.

3.1.2 Homelessness initiative

In December 1999, the federal government announced it would contribute $753 million between 2000 and 2003 to help alleviate and prevent homelessness across Canada. Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) is responsible for most programs in the homelessness initative.

In March 2000, proposals from all across the country were being considered for the following initiatives. The amount of the total funds for projects in B.C. was not known.

Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative $305 million targeted to plan and implement comprehensive local strategies to prevent and reduce homelessness. In order to participate in this initiative, matching funds are required. These could be provided by another level of government, a community-based organization or the private sector.

Existing Federal Programs Related to Homelessness $170 million will be used to expand successful existing federal programs. These funds will be geared to:

Youth ($59 million). Under Canada's Youth Employment Strategy, new funding will be geared towards projects that give homeless youth an opportunity to gain work experience and develop life skills.

Aboriginal Peoples ($59 million). Under the Federal Government's Urban Aboriginal Strategy, funds will be provided to increase services and support mechanisms for urban Aboriginal homeless people.

Shelters for Victims of Family Violence ($43 million). The Shelter Enhancement Initiative will be expanded to include repair and improvements to existing shelters and second-stage housing for women and children leaving an abusive home or relationship. While funding is mainly directed to existing facilities, some funding will be available to create new spaces, or acquire existing space for use as emergency or second-stage housing.

Assistance for Community Plans and Research ($9 million). Funds will be available for work to be done with the provinces and community partners to develop community plans and help communities share best practices.

RRAP An additional $268 million will be available for RRAP and related programs over four years. This includes assistance to upgrade rental and rooming house accommodation for individuals at risk of homelessness. New program flexibility will also allow for the conversion of non-residential buildings into housing for low-income people.

Properties for Housing $10 million will be set aside to make certain surplus federal properties available on a case-by-case basis.

3.2 The B.C. government

Many provincial ministries and agencies help communities reduce homelessness. The lead agency is BC Housing, although many arms of the provincial government work with non-profit societies and community agencies and health authorities on emergency shelters, second stage housing and permanent housing. Other provincial ministries provide a regulatory framework, conduct research and prepare educational materials.

> [illegible] many provincial ministries help communities reduce homelessness.”

3.2.1 BC Housing

Through HOMES BC, the provincial government works with non-profit groups and housing co-ops to increase the supply of affordable housing for families, seniors and those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The program was officially launched in 1994, although the provincial government unilaterally began funding non-profit housing in 1993.

Between 1994 and 1998, the provincial government funded more than 4,100 units of housing for families, seniors, urban singles, individuals with disabilities and those who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. HOMES BC was expanded in June 1999, to provide over a two-year period, 2,400 new affordable housing units for low-income households and individuals with special needs.

There are two components of the HOMES BC program targeted specifically to individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. These are the Homeless/At Risk of Homelessness (HARH) and Lower Income Urban Singles (LIUS) components.

HARH was specifically designed to assist individuals who are hard to house and at risk of homelessness. These individuals would have previously fallen through the cracks of the housing, health and social service systems. Housing funded through the HARH component provides an intermediate stage between emergency shelter and fully independent housing. It is often referred to as second stage or supportive housing.

In 1999/2000, additional funding was earmarked on a pilot basis for the HARH component of HOMES BC to support projects that combine second stage housing and short-term housing within a single development or building. These are called multi-service housing.

The combination of short and longer-term housing is intended to assist individuals moving from the street or shelter system to stable housing. These developments could contain the capacity for additional temporary shelter beds during the severe cold or wet weather.

The additional funds were to be allocated as quickly as good proposals were made. Non-profit societies, in partnership with the private sector and other government agencies, responded quickly. By March 2000, the program was fully subscribed.

In 1999/2000, LIUS became a regular component of HOMES BC. BC Housing earmarked 700 housing units for lower income singles who are at risk of homelessness, and who are generally capable of independent living with limited support.

The Community Housing Initiatives (CHI) program, another part of HOMES BC, assists grass-roots societies to identify and address their community's particular housing issues. A broad range of activities have been supported, from one-day workshops to year-long community development projects.

Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) provides financial support for low income seniors (age 60 and over) living in private market rental units who pay more than 30% of their incomes to rent. SAFER is also administered by BC Housing.

3.2.2 Other provincial programs

Many ministries have programs which help homeless individuals and those at risk of homelessness.

Different ministries provide assistance for shelters serving different groups. The Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security (SDES) funds non-profit groups to provide emergency shelter to individuals and families with children. The Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, through regional health authorities, provides funding to address the health needs of individuals who are homeless. The Ministry of Women's Equality funds transition and safe houses for women leaving abusive homes or relationships. The Ministry for Children and Families funds programs for youth, including safe houses, and drug and alcohol treatment programs for youth and adults.

The Supported Independent Living Program within the Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for

Seniors is a supportive housing program which enables persons with severe and persistent mental illness to live independently with the assistance of outreach support services, such as meal preparation and psychiatric nursing. BC Housing administers a rent subsidy to those individuals who live in market rental housing.

Landlord/tenant relationships are defined by provincial legislation. The **Residential Tenancy Act**, administered by the Ministry of Attorney General, provides a framework for determining rents and resolving disputes between tenants and landlords. In 1989, the provincial government extended the Act to include SROs. Many low income British Columbians who live in these residential hotels and motels gained security of tenure through this amendment.

Local government tools and powers are defined through the **Local Government Act**. All municipalities and regional districts are required to have policies regarding affordable housing in their Official Community Plans (OCPs). Through Local Government Act Reform, the provincial government will work on initiatives that support provincial housing goals and objectives. The Housing Policy Branch (SDES) has worked with local governments to develop many of the tools identified in the following section.

3.3 A challenge for local government

Many local governments in B.C. are using a growing range of tools and resources to address homelessness. Tools for preserving and maintaining existing affordable rental housing include conversion control bylaws, standards of maintenance bylaws, and secondary suite policies. Local governments can also monitor and help to maintain the existing supply of SROs and rooming houses, as the City of Vancouver has done. Tools to create affordable rental housing include density bonusing, provision of land, and fast tracking of development approval. Section 5 includes many examples and case studies which illustrate additional roles for local governments: contributing funding, donating buildings, providing strong council and staff support, initiating ideas, and assisting with the organization and administration of initiatives.

The challenge for local governments is to work with their limited financial resources to reduce homelessness. Partnerships with community groups and senior levels of government are keys to success.

3.4 A challenge for health authorities

Health authorities increasingly see that they have a role in housing. Evidenced-based research clearly identifies the link between health and housing. The lack of safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing negatively impacts the health of individuals and increases the use of health services, particularly hospital in-patient and emergency services. Research also clearly shows that the provision of adequate, affordable housing and necessary support services can significantly improve individual health and reduce the need for higher cost health interventions.

[redacted]

Health authorities play a vital role in addressing homelessness by funding support services for individuals with complex health and social needs. Examples and case studies throughout this guide illustrate a variety of ways that health authorities have contributed to the overall success of projects that reduce homelessness.

Health authorities also play an important role in supporting and promoting research. On Vancouver's North Shore, the health authority coordinated an important study on homelessness, and developed an ongoing tracking system which allows them to adapt programs to community needs.

3.5 A challenge for the community

Community agencies often initiate, plan, and assemble the resources for projects that respond to homelessness, as many case studies in this guide show. Many community agencies have broad mandates to provide a variety of services in addition to developing and managing housing. Employment training and alcohol & drug counselling are a few ways community groups and agencies help individuals make the transition to stable, permanent housing.

Regional housing centres often play an important role in helping to develop an understanding of affordable rental housing issues. The centres act as a resource to individuals and groups in the community interested in housing. They also conduct research into local housing issues and collect background material and statistics.

4 Understanding Homelessness in Your Community

4. Understanding homelessness in your community

One of the first steps in addressing homelessness is to find out more about who and how many people are homeless in your community, as well as some of the reasons for their homelessness.

There are a variety of methods for counting people who are homeless in your community. Five different approaches to collecting data are briefly described in this part of the guide. For each approach, the type of information collected, definitions, limitations, examples and contact names, where available, are provided. Each community may select a different approach at a different time, or use a combination of approaches.

Whenever personal information is collected and recorded, policies and procedures should be followed to protect the privacy of individuals providing the information. A consent form is helpful to inform participants of the purposes of the questions and the use of the data. When partners are governed by the **Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act**, its requirements should be met.

"... find out more about who and how many people are homeless, as well as some of the reasons"

4.1 Existing agency and published sources

Reviewing existing information can give a sense of the larger factors affecting homelessness in your community. Although the data may not measure the actual number of homeless individuals, it can indicate general housing needs and whether community members have sufficient income. The Muskoka, Ontario case study (page 18) illustrates this approach, as does a community initiative in Nelson, B.C.

Some useful types of data and their sources are listed below.

Type of Information	Source
Food bank use	Local Food bank
Evictions	Tenants Rights Action Coalition
Rental vacancy rates, market rents, affordability indicators	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
Housing, poverty, and income measures	Statistics Canada, BC Stats, CMHC, Canadian Council on Social Development
Social housing, waiting lists, and other need and demand indicators	BC Housing, Non profit housing groups
Transition houses	B.C. Society of Transition Houses
Emergency shelters	Local shelter in your area (if it exists) to determine usage

Nelson Needs Assessment: An example of data collection from existing sources

Representatives of churches, mental health groups, the women's centre and other advocacy groups met with local government officials to pool their knowledge and to determine the extent of homelessness in Nelson. They found a diverse list of reasons why people lost their housing:

- Families evicted
- Individuals out of hospital with no support network
- People with chronic mental illness discharged from the regional psychiatric ward
- Out of town patients waiting for day surgery at the regional hospital
- People who lost their homes due to vandalism or fire
- Youth and adults leaving abusive homes or relationships

This data helped the community develop further steps in responding to homelessness. Contact: Nelson Advocacy Centre, phone 250-352-5777.

4.2 Non-sheltered homeless people

If there are no emergency shelters in your community, a count of people sleeping elsewhere is a good place to start. In communities with shelters, this type of count is also a useful supplement to a count of shelter clients, as not all individuals who are homeless use emergency shelters. A limited amount of descriptive information can also be collected, such as age and gender.

Places to include in counts of non-sheltered homeless people are:

- Outside – parks, alleys, bridges
- Inside – parked cars, underground parking garages, abandoned buildings, squats
- Facilities like jails and hospital emergency rooms

Two approaches may be used to find homeless people. One is to focus on outside areas known to be home to people sleeping outside. These areas are often identified by:

- Staff in local government department such as parks, engineering, sanitation and police
- Mental health workers
- Volunteers in soup kitchens

The other approach is to divide the area into a grid, with teams responsible for different areas.

Two examples of homeless counts follow.

Vancouver walkabouts

In Vancouver, the City's Tenant Assistance Program Coordinator conducts walkabouts to search for and count homeless people. Homeless individuals are also interviewed and appropriate services are provided. Groups of volunteers work together in teams of two. Most of the volunteers come from hospitals, churches, and agencies that work with the homeless.

The count is most successful when walkabout team members have these qualities:

- One male and one female
- Gentle, non-threatening personalities
- Physically fit enough to cover a lot of ground on foot
- Knowledgeable about neighbourhood streets and alleys

The hours between 2 and 6 in the morning are the most successful time for the walkabouts. The team establishes a safety code and does not enter places where it may be difficult to get out or dangerous, such as squats. It is impossible to cover the entire city in one night, but a neighbourhood may be manageable with a trained group of volunteers.

The Vancouver coordinator goes over the same routes several times to ensure that the information collected is reliable. Contact: Tenant Assistance Program Coordinator, City of Vancouver, 604-873-7488.

North Shore homeless survey

The Office of the Medical Health Officer, North Shore Health Region, North Vancouver coordinated a regional homeless survey. There are no emergency shelters in the City or District of North Vancouver, or West Vancouver.

The North Shore Health Region asked social service and other agencies to interview homeless individuals as they become aware of them. The purposes of the survey were to:

- Determine the number of homeless individuals on Vancouver's North Shore
- Obtain basic demographic information about them
- Learn more about the circumstances that led to their homelessness
- Learn more about their needs

The aim is to gain an understanding over several months by counting and describing homeless individuals. Contact: Health Information Officer, North Shore Health Region, 604-983-6871.

4.3 Shelter clients

The most frequently used method of counting and describing people who are homeless is by tallying the number of individuals who use the shelter system. As noted, this approach does not include:

- People who do not use shelters and sleep 'rough'
- Sub-groups such as women, youth and Aboriginal People for whom there are few emergency shelters

Often, shelter counts provide the best information available.

A **point-in-time measure** captures information about the individuals who used emergency shelters on a particular night. This essentially measures the capacity and limitations of the shelter system. For instance, if there are no shelters that accept youth under 19, then the count or snapshot will not include anyone under 19 years of age. The people who used the shelters on a certain day may differ from shelter clients on another day. Appendix B reports on a point-in-time measure of individuals using shelters throughout British Columbia on Nov. 19, 1999.

When using point-in-time measures, information should also be collected on the number of turnaways (people not admitted to shelters) and whether the individuals were turned away because there was no bed available or because the bed that was available was not suitable for them. For example, a woman could be turned away from a men's shelter. Recording information on turnaways helps show how many people are not served by shelters.

Another measure called **period prevalence** is becoming more common. Period prevalence counts the number of individual clients of the shelter system over a certain time period. For example, the Golden Task Force in Toronto was able to obtain period prevalence information that counted and described all the different people who used the Toronto shelter system over the course of a one-year and a nine-year period. This measure usually identifies a greater number of individuals than point-in-time measures.

Few B.C. shelters keep records that allow period measures of individual clients. In other provinces, some period prevalence measures use a survey to identify individual clients of the shelter system while others use existing administrative databases.

Record keeping was scheduled to change in 2000, with the introduction of Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS), a CMHC-sponsored program that standardizes data collection at shelters across Canada. HIFIS designers paid particular attention to the information needs of agencies developing policies and programs to reduce homelessness. They paid equal attention to the protection of privacy of individuals and families who are homeless.

Count of individuals who are homeless in Calgary

The City of Calgary Community Services Department undertakes biennial surveys of various downtown shelters and non-shelter service providers to determine the number of people served on a designated night. Surveys of emergency shelters and other agencies, such as hospitals, social service agencies, police and women's transition houses, were taken in 1992, 1994, 1996 and 1998.

The 1998 count involved 22 organizations. Participants were asked to record the number of homeless persons spending the night in their facility, or whom they had observed sleeping on the street, as well as demographic information. An outdoor sweep was also conducted of the downtown area. Contact: City of Calgary, 403-268-5119.

Count of homeless persons in Edmonton

A count of homeless persons in Edmonton was organized by the Edmonton Task Force on Homelessness to provide a current snapshot of the homeless population and to provide a baseline against which changes in homelessness can be monitored. Task force partners who assisted in organizing and implementing the count included the City of Edmonton, Alberta Family and Social Services, Alberta Municipal Affairs and community agencies.

There were two components of the count: a direct count of people in emergency shelter beds; and an indirect count to capture the nonsheltered homeless through a street count, snowball count (asking individuals if they know of other homeless people), agency count, turnaway count, and discharge count from facilities. The task force recommended that this initiative be continued on a regular basis. Contact: Senior Planner, City of Edmonton, 780-496-6027.

4.4 Inventory of SROs, motels and/or rooming houses

Another way to understand the risk of homelessness in a community is to gather information on the housing stock that houses the people most at risk of becoming homeless. In many communities, this housing stock is SRO hotels, motels and rooming houses rented by the week or month. The location can be determined by speaking to municipal licencing officials, fire safety inspectors, housing advocates and agencies and community agencies that help individuals and families with a low income. Newspaper ads are also a source of information. The number of units can be confirmed by speaking to the manager on the phone or in person.

It is useful to monitor the inventory over time, as a loss of stock could mean increased homelessness unless replacement housing is provided.

> *"Gather information on the housing stock that houses the people most at risk of becoming homeless"*

SRO inventories have been carried out in Nanaimo, Victoria, Vancouver and New Westminster. Estimating the number of rooming houses is difficult as they are not typically licensed and outwardly resemble single family homes. Rooming house counts have been conducted in Victoria, Kamloops and New Westminster. A Victoria study asked survey respondents for addresses, carried out on site inspections and reviewed licensing databases to identify rooming houses, with some success.

Nanaimo SRO Inventory: An example of monitoring housing stock

As part of a housing needs assessment conducted for the City of Nanaimo in 1999, the City took an inventory of SRO hotels. The inventory included the address, ownership/ management information, number of units, number of vacant units, rental rates, other charges such as key deposit, security or damage deposit, services, number of tenants by gender, and comments. A form was developed to record information consistently. Contact: Social Planner, City of Nanaimo, 250-755-4483.

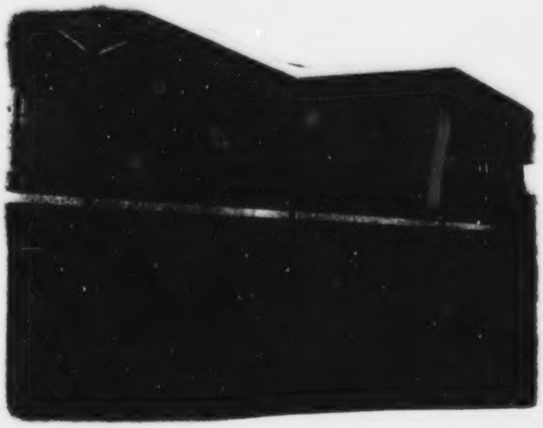
4.5 Survey of SRO, motel and/or rooming house occupants

The next step is to get a better understanding of who lives in SRO units, motels or rooming houses. This is typically done by means of a tenant survey. In order to be representative the survey must either include all tenants or a statistically significant sample.

This has been done on a periodic basis in Vancouver. The Main and Hastings Community Development Society recently carried out a survey of 1,400 Vancouver SRO occupants to determine:

- Who lives in SRO units
- Features of their unit
- Tenant satisfaction
- Health issues
- Income source

Contact: Main and Hastings Community Development Society, 604-688-5305.



Understanding homelessness in Muskoka

Unique aspects of this initiative

Muskoka Community Services increased understanding of homelessness through a provincially-funded project starting in October 1998. It consulted with community agencies in the rural Ontario municipality and found some Muskoka residents have problems locating and maintaining affordable housing. Matters are worse for individuals with mental illness and for everyone in the winter months.

This case study is an example of a rural municipality recognizing that it has a problem with homelessness and addressing it through research and action.

Background

On the recommendation of the Provincial Task Force on Homelessness in Ontario (1998), the Ontario provincial government committed $10.5 million to an Ontario Provincial Homeless Initiative Fund (OPHIF). To receive funds, the Ontario provincial government required local governments to work with the community to develop solutions to homelessness. The fund was to be used to develop innovative approaches to achieving one or more of the following three broad objectives:

- To get homeless individuals off the street
- To get individuals out of shelters and into permanent accommodation
- To prevent people from losing their housing

Forty-seven Ontario municipalities with social service delivery agencies were allocated OPHIF contributions. Muskoka received $40,000 in October 1998.

The project was guided by an advisory group of representatives from Muskoka community service agencies. It resulted in publication of the August 1999 report entitled **"Understanding Homelessness in Muskoka."** The report assessed the extent of the homeless situation in Muskoka, identified a number of key local causes and made recommendations.

Many of the day-to-day elements of the project were done by a staff member hired for five months in the capacity of a housing help worker. The job was to:

- Assist homeless or potentially homeless individuals and families to secure accommodation
- Document the scope and causes of accommodation problems leading to homelessness
- Recommend ways to reduce the incidence of homelessness in Muskoka

The research assessed the extent of homelessness in the area by reviewing:

- Shelter population in the surrounding area
- Use of emergency vouchers
- Motel dwellers
- Extent and depth of poverty
- Rental rates
- Food bank usage
- Evictions

Case Study 1 – Muskoka

Phase One of this initiative ended with a report to Muskoka District Council in September 1999, which council adopted. The report and recommendations were also submitted to the Ontario provincial government. Phase Two – operating a housing help service and implementing the nine recommendations – began in October 1999. The District of Muskoka is organizing a conference for other neighbouring jurisdictions to explore the question of "Best Practices".

"Bricks and Mortar"

No new housing was produced during Phase One of this initiative.

Services to tenants

Staff provided information on how to look for housing, explained tenants' legal rights and responsibilities, assisted with working out a budget, liaised with social services and other agencies, contacted landlords who may have available units and developed a preliminary registry of available apartments. In the five months of the pilot project, a staff member assisted 116 households, consisting of 278 individuals including children.

Funding

The Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services made an initial allocation of $40,000 in October 1998. The Ontario government added $20,000 in the spring of 1999 and $40,000 for phase two in the fall of 1999. The Ontario government has made no further funding commitments, although it has said it may provide an annual allotment.

Role of key players

Participant Type	Name	Role/Contribution
Community/Provincial agencies	Addiction Outreach Community Living Associations Community Mental Health District Health Council Family, Youth and Children's Service of Muskoka Muskoka Interval House Muskoka Legal Clinic Muskoka Community Services Muskoka District Housing Authority Muskoka-Parry Sound Health Unit Ontario Provincial Police Salvation Army	• Guided the project • Met monthly • Provided advice, assistance to staff
Local government	District Municipality of Muskoka	Organization, administration
Provincial government	Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services	Funding a total of $100,000 to date

Case Study 1 – Muskoka

Factors relating to success

Community agencies were involved from the start. As a result, more people in the community knew about issues of homelessness and more groups worked to reduce homelessness.

Early in the process, participants could see that their actions made a difference to individuals who are homeless or at risk of homelessness in their community.

Major obstacles or barriers

There were no major obstacles encountered during phase one. Phase two – implementation of the recommendations – is expected to be much more challenging.

Lessons learned and transferability

- Many community agencies must be involved in projects to reduce homelessness
- Once an issue has been identified, it is important that action be taken right away to help resolve it
- Staff should be familiar with income assistance and health programs

Similar initiatives

Forty-seven Ontario municipalities have provincial government funding for similar projects.

Contact

Ian Turnbull
Community Services Department
District Municipality of Muskoka
70 Pine Street
Bracebridge ON P1L 1N3

Phone: 705-645-2100 ext 334
Fax: 705-645-5319

Email: iturnbull@muskoka.on.ca

Copies of the report are available on line at the Housing Again website: http://www.housingagain.web.net/

4.6 Additional resources

Methods to assess the extent of homelessness in a community have been described in this chapter. Two additional books which provide more detailed information are:

Practical Methods for Counting Homeless People: A Manual for States and Local Jurisdictions. Interagency Council on the Homeless and the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, March 1992.

It contains an assessment of a wide variety of commonly used methods for learning about the homeless population ranging from the relatively simple to the very sophisticated. It describes practical methods for collecting information on homeless persons residing on the street or in shelters and on populations who are precariously housed.

An Enumeration and Needs Assessment of the Homeless in Houston/Harris County. Report to the City of Houston, Harris County, and The Department of Veterans Affairs, October 1996.

This document reports on the results of a 1996 enumeration of the homeless in Houston and Harris County. It includes a literature review and bibliography on counting the homeless, as well as a detailed description of the count methodology used.

To obtain a copy of the above reports, contact BC Housing, 604-433-1711.

4.7 Checklist for measuring homelessness

- ☐ Key individuals /agencies are involved in planning
- ☐ A definition of homelessness is adopted; the scope of the study is determined
- ☐ Objectives and purpose of data collection is clearly determined
- ☐ Cooperation of major players has been obtained
- ☐ The type of information that is required is understood
- ☐ The geographic scope is set
- ☐ Those to be included in the data collection have been determined
- ☐ A survey or count form has been developed
- ☐ The form has been pre-tested and revised if needed
- ☐ The timing of the data collection has been set, bearing in mind the date income assistance cheques are issued
- ☐ Clear understanding of privacy issues and when informed consent is required
- ☐ Training of enumerators is complete
- ☐ Clear reporting procedures are set
- ☐ Responses date is set

5

Strategies to Address Homelessness

This section illustrates how a variety of tools and strategies are being used to address homelessness. Some initiatives focus on the social side of housing and shelter through effective policies, programs and services. Others focus on the physical side – development and building. Many initiatives include both social and physical elements.

5.1 Consultation and planning processes

Developing housing for individuals and families with special needs or low incomes can be a complex and challenging process. It is as important to plan for neighbourhood support as it is to plan the physical aspects of a housing development.

This section of the guide provides descriptions and examples of ways to involve the community in the planning process.

These include:

- Public forums
- Multi-stakeholder working groups
- Housing task forces and committees
- Community development process
- Evaluation

5.1.1 Public forums

A public forum provides an opportunity to share information and identify possible responses to the housing issues in a community.

The basic steps in organizing a forum follow, with more detail provided in Appendix D:

- Establish a core planning group
- Set goals
- Create a detailed event plan
- Coordinate resource people and facilitators
- Hold the forum(s)
- Follow up

The Cool Waters case study (page 26) shows how a forum can be an important step in a process leading to the creation of affordable housing. Another example is the series of six neighbourhood forums on affordable housing sponsored by Maple Ridge's Social Planning Advisory Committee. Combined with two full-day open houses held in local shopping malls, these sessions provided a way to learn what residents thought about affordable housing issues.

5.1.2 Multi-stakeholder working groups

A working group brings together people and organizations who share a common interest. Often new partnerships and innovative solutions are developed. Both local governments and community groups can benefit from working groups.

Cold/Wet Weather Strategy: An example of agencies and governments working together

The Lower Mainland Cold/Wet Weather Strategy began as a pilot initiative in 1998 to respond to the increased demand for emergency shelter during the winter months when weather conditions seriously threaten the health or lives of individuals who are without shelter.

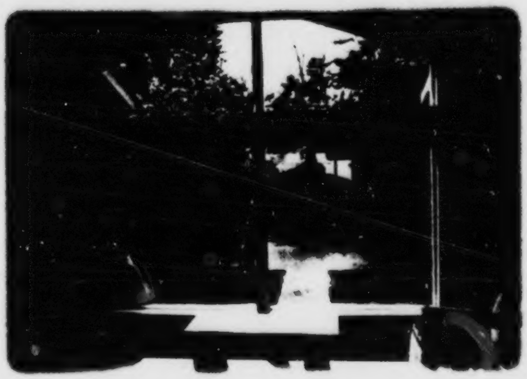
Provincial agencies, local governments, and health boards collaborated in creating a multi-stakeholder working group. Their main goal was to improve the coordination of shelter and social services in the Lower Mainland during the winter months. Over a period of several months, they took an inventory of shelter beds, reviewed admissions policies at the various shelters, reviewed whether existing shelters could be expanded and resources required to provide temporary services. They obtained funds and implemented the strategy. Contact: BC Housing, 604-433-1711.

5.1.3 Task forces and committees

A task force is a body of people who work in a set period of time on a specific issue. In contrast, a committee is typically a group that meets over a long period of time with a broader mandate. In either case, the group should have clear terms of reference that may include:

- The organization(s) establishing the task force, and those providing financial support and policy direction
- The functions of the task force or committee, including a clear statement of the task to be addressed
- How, and to whom, the task force or committee will report on its findings
- The timeframe in which the work is to be completed
- The number of members or range, e.g. seven to 12 people
- Expertise required by members, and/or whether they should represent specific interest groups or agencies
- The roles of members, e.g., the chair, co-chair, and recording secretary
- Selection criteria and process, and duration of appointments of members
- Administrative details, such as frequency of meetings, quorum, and whether agreement is reached by consensus

Both local governments and community groups have set up task forces or advisory committees to address housing and the need for emergency shelter.



Nanaimo Community Process: An example of municipal-led consultation

In 1992, the Social Planning Advisory Committee of City Council in Nanaimo was concerned about the growing number of people living on the street. In a report to council, it recommended that a Community Steering Committee on Housing be formed to work on issues related to individuals at risk of homelessness and to guide the development of an emergency shelter by 1994. The steering committee should have representatives from the City, the community and various provincial ministries and support agencies.

In 1993 the City, along with the provincial income assistance and health ministries, funded a needs assessment. Phase one included interviews with individuals who had periodically experienced homelessness and agencies that provide services to these individuals. Phase two described five options.

Although the original focus of the committee was on the need for an emergency shelter, the focus expanded to include longer-term housing options. This became phase three of the study. The steering committee held a public forum to share its findings.

In the end, the steering committee recommended that second stage housing be developed. With the assistance of BC Housing, the Prideaux Project for Individuals at Risk of Homeless was developed. It is run by the Nanaimo Affordable Housing Society. Contact: Planning Department, City of Nanaimo, 250-755-4483.

5.1.4 Community development process

Through a community development process, various community groups, agencies and levels of government come together to address a multi-faceted problem. Typically, they involve multi-stakeholder working groups, public involvement and an event, such as an open house or a workshop. Several components contribute to a successful process, but particularly important are a commitment to improve the community, a willingness to listen to the concerns of others and involvement of partners who usually do not work together.

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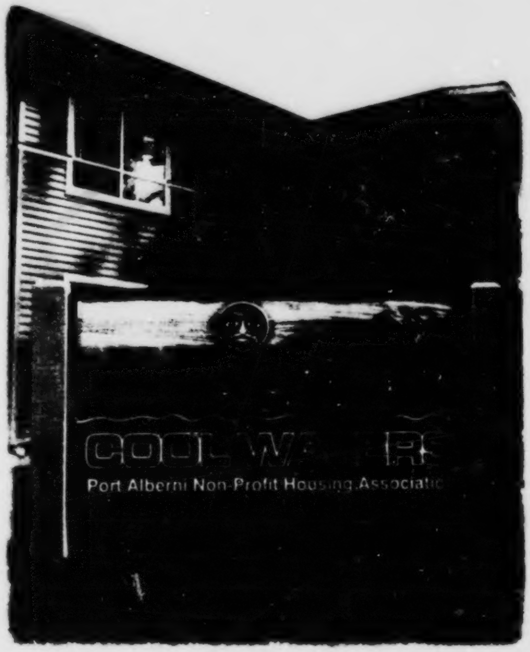
In Port Alberni, the community came together to address the lack of affordable, safe, secure housing for individuals who are homeless. The following case study describes their work.



Cool Waters: An inclusive community process

Unique aspect of this initiative

Cool Waters is a 20-unit, non-profit housing complex created for a diverse mix of lower income singles. It is operated by the Port Alberni Non-Profit Housing Association (PANPHA). This project is an example of how diverse interests and organizations can come together to act on a common concern about access to safe and affordable housing.

Background

In 1994, planning for Cool Waters began as the result of an anti-poverty forum about housing and other issues of importance to people in Port Alberni. Forum participants said it was becoming increasingly difficult for people to find decent, safe, affordable housing.

A working group on housing was formed as a result of the forum. The group used a $5,000 Community Housing Initiatives (CHI) grant from BC Housing to canvass the community for groups prepared to work together and to identify actions that should be taken.

In 1995, six agencies formed a coalition that led to the formation of PANPHA:

- Port Alberni Women's Resources Centre
- Mental Health Services
- Port Alberni Friendship Centre
- Family Guidance (a community group that works with people on low incomes)
- Citizens Advocacy (a group that works with individuals with developmental disabilities)
- Ministry of Social Services (now the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security)

In 1996, PANPHA received an additional $20,000 CHI grant to continue their work to understand Port Alberni's housing issues. Maintaining interest in this prolonged community development process was challenging, especially for those groups who normally work on short-term projects.

A tragic event in the community was a vivid reminder of the issues raised at the anti-poverty forum. An Aboriginal woman burned to death in a local slum apartment; she was unable to escape because of a broken doorknob. This event spurred groups to develop safer housing for low income residents of Port Alberni.

PANPHA and the planning team next looked at the capacities and needs of people in the community. Working with a consultant, they invited community groups and key leaders, such as the mayor and BC Housing staff, to a one-day workshop at the local college. Participants decided that the priority was to create housing for single people and for a variety of individuals with special needs, such as a mental illness.

Anticipating concern from neighbours, they organized a public meeting. PANPHA Administrator Denny Durocher recalls: "We knew the nearby residents were really concerned about this place being ugly. They were also concerned about who the project would bring into the neighbourhood."

To resolve these concerns, PANPHA invited local resident representation on the design committee and on the tenant selection committee. Through a series of meetings, nearby residents further clarified their concerns and interests, and had meaningful input in planning the project, particularly the exterior design.

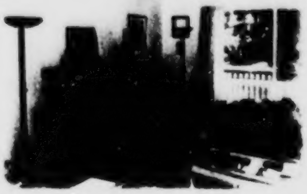
The PANPHA board also received valuable advice from a planner with the City of Port Alberni, who had experience working on innovative social housing developments.

In April 1999, tenants began to move in. The original tenants included 11 women and nine men. Of this group, four had First Nations heritage, seven were over fifty years of age, four were in their twenties, four had developmental disabilities, three used wheelchairs, five used mental health services and seven were overcoming alcohol and drug dependencies.

The name "Cool Waters" was selected through a community consultation which asked: 'what is the name of the thing that situates this place in the world?' Cool Waters is a translation of **Maalth-tsit**, the original name of a nearby creek.

"Bricks and Mortar"

In June 1998, construction began. The development includes 20 one-bedroom units in a two-storey "U" shaped structure. Unit sizes range from 550 to 635 square feet: two units are fully wheelchair accessible and two more are designed to be adapted to accessible units when necessary. The exterior is clad in high quality cedar siding, which was provided by MacMillan Bloedel at a low cost.



The design is intended to foster tenant interaction, encourage neighbours to look out for each other, and to enhance security. The units face a Mediterranean-style courtyard with a wheelchair accessible herb garden. A separate building contains a common room, a laundry room, and a kitchen.

Services to tenants

The PANPHA Board is committed to fostering ongoing tenant involvement. The Cool Waters Tenant Council, established in September 1999, has carried out a wide variety of activities, including setting up an emergency fund/lending circle, organizing community dinners, coordinating crime prevention education, and developing an Emergency Response Committee.

In March 2000, PANPHA was working with provincial government agencies and the health authority to provide support services.

Case Study 2 - Cool Waters

Role of key players

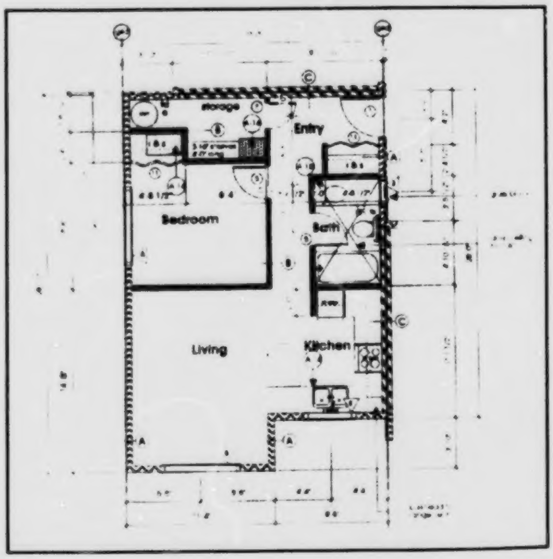
Participant Type	Name	Role/Contribution
Non-profit society	Port Alberni Non-Profit Housing Association	Leadership, coordination, consultation with constituent groups, management
Community	Neighbours, other individuals	Participated in forum and workshop; local resident representation on design and tenant selection committees
Local government	City of Port Alberni	Strong advisory support through development process. Contributed staff and advice on landscaping and a community garden
Provincial government	BC Housing	Provided Community Housing Initiatives grants, capital and operating costs through HOMES B.C. (originally HARH and then LIUS components)
	BC Buildings Corporation Ministry of Health	Provided land, valued at $186,000. Mental Health Services donated $3,000 to help with community organization
Private sector	MacMillan Bloedel	Provided cedar siding at low cost

Factors related to success

- Combining of strong community and local government support together with provincial government funding
- Asking for community input and involvement
- Seeing potential tenants as having skills and assets, not just needs
- Involving neighbours, especially in exterior building design and tenant selection

Lessons learned and transferability

- Be respectful of the individuals the initiative intends to serve
- Build trust among potential neighbours, potential tenants and community agencies
- Let the community own the problem and the solution



Contact

Denny Durocher, Administrator
Port Alberni Non-profit Housing Association
111-4777 Southgate Road
Port Alberni BC V9Y 8J3

Phone: 250-720-2136
Fax: 250-720-2137

Email: panpha@island.net
Website: www.island.net/~panpha

5.1.5 Evaluation

Evaluation, or measuring the effectiveness of a program or any other initiative regarding homelessness, can be done through an internal, external, or collaborative process. Internal evaluations typically are informal and are conducted by the agency delivering the program. Internal evaluations are often very useful for program development purposes, but they may be of limited use to funding agencies. External evaluations are conducted by a professional evaluator, typically on behalf of a funding agency. Collaborative evaluations, which are conducted jointly by an evaluator and agency staff, can balance internal and external needs.

Program evaluations look at inputs, outputs, and outcomes. These terms are defined as follows:

- **Inputs** are resources dedicated to a program, such as money, staff time, equipment and facilities
- **Outputs** are quantities of service provided (e.g. numbers of clients served)
- **Outcomes** are changes for individuals or systems that result from a program

As with other types of research, there are three main phases in an evaluation project:

- **Design** involves identification of what will be measured and how. The "what will be measured" part consists of defining specific outputs and out comes. The "how" part consists of developing and testing data gathering tools (e.g. interview questions and surveys)
- **Data gathering** consists of using the tools to systematically assemble information
- **Analysis & reporting** involves use of quantitative and qualitative techniques to present in a report

Examples of evaluations are:

- **Building a Strong Shelter System in the Lower Mainland:** An Initial Evaluation of the Cold/Wet Weather Strategy
- **Evaluation of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Initiatives:** Development of a Research Design and Baseline Report
- **Evaluation of Active Support Against Poverty's temporary winter shelter in Prince George**

Contact: BC Housing, 604-433-1711.

5.2 Local government tools to preserve and create affordable rental housing

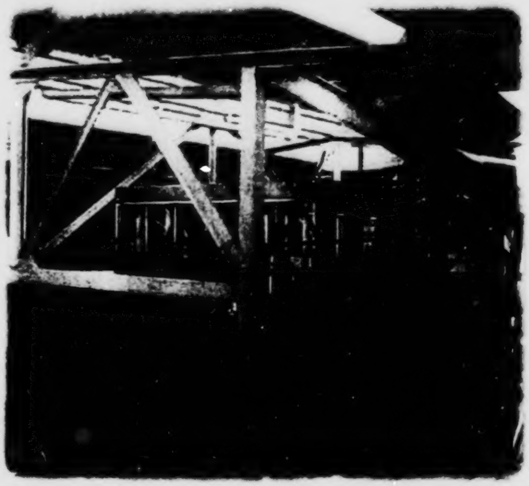
This section provides an overview of tools for local governments to preserve and maintain existing affordable rental housing stock, ways to help maintain existing housing for low income members of a community, and tools to promote and assist in the creation of new affordable rental housing. Affordable rental housing reduces the risk of homelessness.

5.2.1 SROs and rooming houses

Local governments have a role in protecting the housing stock used by people most at risk of homelessness – the people living in single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, motels and rooming houses.

Some things local governments can do:

- Develop policies and initiatives that recognize the importance of SROs and rooming houses in preventing homelessness and the implications for tenants if units are lost
- Monitor the stock to keep track of the number of units and to address health and safety issues. An example of this approach is provided by the City of Kamloops
- Adopt a standards of maintenance bylaw to encourage repair and maintenance of rental housing (see section 5.2.2)



Kamloops rooming house initiative: An example of monitoring housing stock

In 1996, the City of Kamloops identified concerns with the rooming house stock in the downtown area. The City organized open house meetings to hear from tenants, landlords, neighbours, social service agencies and the other interested individuals. At the open house, the City heard concerns about neighbourhood impact, safety standards, landlord and tenant disputes, and social issues.

As a result of these meetings, the City created a rooming house task force. City departments, including the building inspectors division, fire and rescue services, community planning division, bylaw services and business licensing section, as well as the RCMP and health unit are represented on the task force. It liaises with the Legal Services Society of B.C., BC Housing and the John Howard Society. The task force meets twice a year or as needed.

The task force created an inventory, based on information about those who had business licenses, a list of rooming houses inspected by the fire department, and knowledge within the planning department.

Making it clear that it did not want to shut down rooming houses, the City encouraged owners to take out business licences and to have fire inspections three times a year. A few owners obtained business licenses and upgraded their properties to meet health and safety standards.

Contact: Planning Department, City of Kamloops,
250-828-3553 or email:
lmitchell@city.kamloops.bc.ca

5.2.2 Standards of maintenance bylaws

Local governments have the authority to enact a standards of maintenance bylaw to enforce basic levels of maintenance for rental accommodation. Through such a bylaw, they can ensure that rooming houses, residential hotels, secondary suites and any other type of rental housing meet minimum standards of comfort and safety.

Standards of maintenance bylaws benefit both the community and tenants. Properties which are maintained are less likely to be demolished or converted to other uses. A standards of maintenance bylaw can help protect a municipality's affordable housing stock.

Several municipalities, including the City of Vancouver and the District of North Vancouver, have adopted a standards of maintenance bylaw to set minimum health and safety standards for rental housing.

The housing ministry published a guide and model standards of maintenance bylaw, and these are posted on the ministry website:
(http://www.sdes.gov.bc.ca/housing)

5.2.3 Conversion control

There are two forms of conversion. There is conversion of tenure, where rental housing is converted to ownership housing. There is also conversion of use, where residential hotels and motels are converted to tourist use. Some older low-rise apartment buildings are also being converted to backpacker hostels.

*ways to help
maintain existing
housing*

Local governments have a role in regulating the conversion of rental housing to strata title. Under the **Strata Property Act**, local governments have the authority to approve or not approve an application to convert rental units to strata title. Local governments are required to consider several factors, including the importance of rental accommodation compared to owner-occupied housing in the area and any proposal of the owner/developer for the relocation of tenants.

Local governments may also monitor or regulate conversion to tourist use. Provincial legislation is not as explicit regarding conversion of other forms of housing. Only the **Vancouver Charter** deals with conversion of residential hotels to tourist use.

Conversion controls: Examples from large and small cities

The **City of North Vancouver** has had a policy regulating the conversion of rental housing to condominium tenure since 1979. This policy was amended in 1992 to permit conversion only when the rental vacancy rate exceeds four per cent for each of the 12 months immediately preceding the application for conversion. This policy applies only to rental housing projects of three or more units.

The **City of Cranbrook** considers an application for strata title conversion only when the municipality's rental vacancy rate is greater than five per cent. The owner/developer must also submit a complete report explaining the relocation of the existing tenants who will be displaced by the conversion.

In the **City of Vancouver**, at least two thirds of the households occupying the building must give written consent to the conversion before Council will consider an application.

5.2.4 Housing agreements

A housing agreement is a contract between a local government and a land owner, registered on title and binding on subsequent owners. Housing agreements allow a local government to work with a developer to provide affordable housing. Agreements are used to ensure that developments that benefit from municipal participation, such as those with increased density or built on municipal land, remain affordable over time.

The units reserved for low income tenants in the Quayside Village Co-housing in the City of North Vancouver are secured by means of housing agreements.

5.2.5 Housing reserve funds

Local governments may create housing reserve funds under section 499 of the **Local Government Act**. They may be used to reduce the cost of a specific housing project in the community or for other affordable housing initiatives. For example, a local government may purchase land with housing reserve fund, then lease it at a discount to a non-profit housing developer.

Affordable housing reserve fund: An example from the City of Richmond

As part of its affordable housing strategy, the City of Richmond created the Affordable Housing Statutory Reserve Fund. Revenue is obtained from individual developers of market housing who require rezoning.

The Ground-Lease Program is a complementary initiative that provides a way for the City to acquire land to lease to non-profit and co-op housing groups. To date, social housing has been developed on land acquired as a result of this initiative. Contact: Planning Department, City of Richmond, 604-276-4220.

Affordable housing reserve fund: An example from the City of North Vancouver

In 1989, the City of North Vancouver established a reserve fund to support the development of affordable housing provided on leased city lands in conjunction with federal or provincial subsidy programs. Initially, the fund received allocations from general revenue on an annual basis, growing with annual accrued interest. More recently, council has directed that a portion of the revenue from sales and leases of Lower Lonsdale lands be dedicated to the fund. At the beginning of 2000, the balance was approximately $1 million. The fund has been used to offset the leasehold value for a non-profit housing development in 1990 and another in 2000. Contact: Planning Department, City of North Vancouver, phone: 604-983-7380.

5.2.6 Density bonusing

Section 904 of the **Local Government Act** gives local governments the ability to provide density bonuses. To achieve a density bonus, a developer enters into a contract with a local government to increase the number of housing units or total floor area on a site in return for affordable or special needs housing or amenities. Amenities could be public art, open space, protection of environmentally sensitive areas and provision of child care centres, but cannot include cash. However, where it is impractical to provide the amenity on-site and where the municipality can link the bonus to a specific project, many local governments are able to reach agreement with a developer for an in-kind contribution.

Density bonusing is most successful in areas that are experiencing sustained pressure for growth and when development is considered attractive in terms of economic benefits and community acceptance. The City of North Vancouver granted Quayside Village Co-housing a density bonus in exchange for affordable housing units.

5.2.7 Comprehensive development zoning

Comprehensive development zoning is used to increase flexibility in allocating density and land uses on particular sites. It allows for mixed residential/commercial developments, and provides an opportunity for municipalities to negotiate for public amenities and affordable housing. Comprehensive development zoning can be, and often is, used in conjunction with density bonusing and housing agreements. Comprehensive development zoning often has a rezoning component to it.

[redacted]

The Edge: An example of affordable rental housing in return for a rezoning

The Edge is a mixed income housing project containing 150 live/work suites in Vancouver. Occupied in April 1999, 30 units are affordable rental housing and 120 are strata-title market units. Fifteen units are rented to low income tenants at the BC Benefits shelter allowance, and an additional 15 rented at the low end of market rates. There are no capital grants or operating subsidies from any level of government in this project.

To achieve rezoning of industrial land to allow live/work units, the developers entered into a housing agreement with the City of Vancouver, providing 22 units to the City at no cost. The City purchased an additional eight units for $782,900. The purchase price for the eight units is covered through a 25-year mortgage that will be recovered through the rents paid on all 30 units. Once the mortgage is paid, rental income will add to the City's Affordable Housing Fund, to be used for other projects. This is a mechanism to provide publicly-owned housing in perpetuity with no government subsidy. Contact: Planning Department, City of Vancouver, phone: 604-873-7670.

Table: Examples of local governments providing land

Municipality	Project	Tool Used
District of North Vancouver	Several developments, including a 36 rental unit for seniors	60-year leases at 75% of free-hold market value
District of Powell River	Lifecycle Housing Society, 30 non-market units	Grant, plus cost sharing of infrastructure
City of Vancouver	Hydrecs House, 9 units for people with mental illness	41 year lease, with prepaid rent equal to about 50% of free-hold market value
City of Victoria	Mike Gidora Place (see case study page 60)	Land sold at below market value - appraised at approximately $250,000; sold for $1

5.2.8 Provision of land

In B.C., local governments have used a variety of tools to provide land for affordable housing development. The table on page 32 provides examples of projects involving local government land grants and below-market leases.

5.2.9 Fast tracking of development approval

Fast tracking of development approvals is a way local governments can increase the number of new affordable housing units in their communities. Fast tracking allows a project to be given priority over other files in all stages of the development review process. Faster development results in lower costs.

In a 2000 survey, 18 B.C. municipalities said they successfully use fast tracking to promote development of affordable housing. The City of Kamloops has a policy designed to fast track the approval of affordable and social housing projects targeted to seniors, low income families, individuals with disabilities, Aboriginals and others in need of assistance. The City of Vancouver's SHORT (Social Housing and Rental Tenure) program has a similar role.

5.2.10 Secondary suite policies

In many B.C. communities, secondary suites are an important part of the affordable housing stock. Adoption of policies that allow secondary suites helps to increase and preserve affordable rental housing.

Many local governments have adopted the BC Building Code standard for secondary suites which provides for practical, lower cost requirements while ensuring secondary suites meet basic health and safety standards.

Although secondary suites may be affordable to many, and provide the tenants with amenities not available in other apartments, they do not offer security of tenure. Owners may remove a suite from the market when they need it for their own household.

Secondary suites policies: Examples from North Vancouver, Victoria, Campbell River, Metchosin and Belcarra

Following an extensive public review process, the **City of North Vancouver** amended its zoning bylaw to allow secondary suites in single detached houses throughout the City. Suites must meet the following provisions:

- The suite must be contained within a single detached dwelling
- Only one secondary suite is permitted per house
- The suite must be no smaller than 400 square feet and no larger than 969 square feet
- The suite may not have separate title from the primary suite and lot
- One additional on-site parking space must be provided

Also, if a property owner wishes to have a secondary suite, they may not have a child care centre or other home-based business.

The **City of Victoria** has a longstanding policy permitting suites in larger houses within all its single family and duplex zones. Legal suites in single detached houses make up about one tenth of the City of Victoria's housing stock. Secondary suites may be approved in homes built before 1970, depending on three factors:

- Community compatibility. Only minor changes to the exterior are permitted
- Sufficient off-street parking while retaining 33% of rear yard space as open green space
- Ample house size, i.e., minimum of 1,615 square feet for two units.

The **District of Campbell River** permits a mix of secondary suites within new subdivisions and considers site-specific rezonings within existing neighbourhoods. Through the approval process, the municipality controls the number and location of new secondary suites in new subdivisions. Applications for rezoning to legalize existing suites are subject to a reduced application fee of $50 compared to $600 for new suites. Suites must meet BC Building Code requirements. In all cases, the suite size is limited to 400 to 700 square feet, one additional parking space must be provided, and the exterior must have the appearance of a single detached home.

The **District of Metchosin** allows secondary suites in most residential zones. Suites may be up to 60 square meters or 35% of the gross floor area of the house, and may be up to four rooms.

The **Village of Belcarra** permits suites in its single family zone, subject to four conditions:

- Septic tank has sufficient capacity for a second unit
- Suite does not exceed 35% of gross floor area of the house

- Suite is no larger than 75 square meters (about 800 square feet)
- One off-street parking space is provided for the suite

5.3 Avoiding economic evictions

Assisting low income tenants to avoid eviction when they are unable to meet rent payments is a strategy to keep individuals from becoming homeless and entering the shelter system. This strategy is often used by community groups and social service agencies.

Families receiving income assistance in B.C. may receive a BC Benefits crisis grant to pay rent if they face eviction. Along the same lines, families receiving income assistance may have rent paid directly to the landlord if they have demonstrated difficulties in paying rent on time.

> ". . . strategy to keep individuals from becoming homeless"

Eviction avoidance: Examples from outside B.C.

An eviction-avoidance approach is being used in the **City of Toronto** by the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation (CERA). Tenants are provided with information and resources that will help them maintain their tenancy. They are also referred to appropriate services such as a rent bank, which provides interest-free loans to low income families with children. A shelter fund provides a grant to families receiving income assistance to help them maintain their housing or relocate to more affordable, safe and secure housing.

Rent bank/eviction avoidance programs operate in many places in the United States. A review of eight initiatives found that most were delivered by community based or local government agencies. Funding comes from a variety of sources, including the state, charitable and corporate donations, and local governments with the authority to deliver social services. Six of the eight projects provide grants to eligible clients. Between 65% and 75% of clients were remaining in their housing one year after the assistance was provided. One of the agencies that provided loans found that 60% had been fully repaid.

The **Connecticut Department of Social Services** implemented a state-wide eviction prevention program in 1990. The program works in partnership with 13 community-based agencies throughout the state. In the New Haven area alone, 84% of the disputes in 1996 were resolved through mediated settlements. The average grant from the rent bank to assist families behind in their rent was $650, compared to the cost of sheltering a family of three in emergency housing for 60 days at a cost of $2,520.

The **City of New York** operates an eviction prevention program whereby each of the City's income support centres has case workers to help prevent people from becoming homeless. The goal is to divert individuals and families from the emergency shelter system where it costs $3,000 a month per family. Case workers are responsible for trying to prevent evictions. Each situation is assessed on a case-by-case basis. Emergency grants are available to assist with unpaid rent.

5.4 Breaking the cycle of homelessness

For some people, affordable housing is not sufficient to break the cycle of homelessness. They require a more comprehensive approach that involves addressing some of the underlying issues related to their homelessness, such as the need for appropriate housing, support services, and employment opportunities. Supportive housing often encompasses these elements.

The degree and type of support required may vary significantly, depending on the individual. It ranges from help with housekeeping, meal preparation, banking and life skills, to medical care, counselling and drop-in programs, referrals to service agencies, and training and employment services. On-site support can be everything from regular visits by a barber to 24-hour staffing by mental health workers.

Local governments may wish to encourage partnerships between non-profit societies, advocacy groups, health authorities and various levels of government to ensure their community has supportive housing. The next three case studies show how a variety of supports and services help individuals break the cycle of homelessness.

Eva's Phoenix: Housing and employment training for youth

Unique aspects of this initiative

Eva's Phoenix in Toronto helps to break the cycle of homelessness by providing housing for 50 individuals who are homeless and are between the ages of 18 and 24 with employment and life skills training. This project is an example of offering both housing and training.

Eva's Phoenix is working with business, labour and community partners to establish innovative approaches to training that leads to real, long-term employment opportunities for youth.

Background

Youth and families with children are the fastest growing group of shelter users in Toronto. Studies show that youth spend from one to eight years living on the streets. Sixty per cent of youth are homeless because of family breakdown, abuse, abandonment or some other crisis.

Eva Smith was a school guidance counsellor who saw the connection between kids having problems in school and homelessness. She worked to create the North York Emergency Home for Youth. Unfortunately, Eva died before the 1994 opening of the shelter. It was named Eva's Place in her honour. In response to a pressing need for youth not well served by the traditional shelter system, a second youth shelter was established in 1997, called Eva's Satellite. Eva's Phoenix is the newest venture, offering a bridge between emergency shelters and complete independence. All three initiatives were brought together under one corporate structure – Eva's Initiatives.

Eva's Phoenix has two components: housing and training. The training component began before the shelter was opened, with construction of 10 housing units in a former fire department repair garage donated by the City of Toronto. Certified instructors led a 15-week construction training program, which included five weeks of in-class training followed by 10 weeks of hands-on training and on-site experience. Participants worked as registered apprentices with skilled carpenters, drywallers and painters. As trainees completed their program, trade union partners helped them find permanent jobs.

As of March 2000, 53 youth started the program and 41 completed the program. Thirty-four of the youth who completed the training program were working full-time and seven were unemployed.

The participants in this training program worked on construction of the shelter. In June 2000, after the shelter opened, Eva's Phoenix expected to begin training programs in a variety of sectors. Another training program was underway before the shelter opened. A major automotive dealer began a pilot project to train 32 youth in all aspects of automobile dealership. Following three months of on-the-job training at the dealership, the participants will be employed for at least six months in other car dealerships in Toronto. A campaign has also been organized in the automotive industry to raise $5 million towards a training opportunity fund for homeless youth to be administered by Eva's Place.

Case Study 3 – Eva's Initiatives

Tenants in Eva's Phoenix will be selected based on their readiness to make a change – to become self-sufficient. They may remain at Eva's Phoenix for up to one year. After that, it is expected that they will be ready to move to their own permanent homes and new jobs. Staff will support tenants during the transition to new homes.

Services to tenants

Services were provided during the original training program, prior to opening of the housing component. In March 2000, services to tenants were being developed. It was anticipated that all services to tenants would be provided by outside agencies, and would assist tenants to become self sufficient. This was expected to include everything from budgeting and conflict resolution to dealing with landlords and dealing with work-place stress.

Role of key players

Participant type	Name	Role/Contribution
Government	City of Toronto	Provided the building, $500,000 towards capital costs and ongoing operating funding
	Human Resources Development Canada	Provided funding for the development phase of the the project and for the construction training program
	Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation	Provided $600,000 through RRAP
	Provincial government	Provided $350,000 through the Ontario Homeless Initiatives Fund. Through the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, provided $180,000 towards the construction training program
Labour	Canadian Auto Workers	Contributed $325,000 towards capital costs
	Carpenters and Allied Workers – Local 27, the Interior Systems Contractors Association of Ontario (ISCA) and International Brotherhood of Painters and Tapers (IBPAT)	Contributed approximately $45,000 towards the construction training program
Corporations	Numerous companies	Provided $140,000
	Daniels Corporation	Assisting in soliciting donations of building materials and is providing some furnishings
	Home Again	A small business that reclaims and sells used building materials is working with Eva's Phoenix to employ homeless youth in the expansion of their operations
	Midtown Saturn Saab Isuzu	Providing training opportunities for 32 homeless youth in all aspects of the automotive dealership including reception, parts, accounting and service
Community	St. Christopher House Rotary Club of Willowdale and Rotary International	Providing on-site counselling and support for the youth involved in the construction training program Provided seed funding and advice for the creation of an on-site printing business
	Youth-serving agencies and local residents	Involved on a Resource Working Group to develop programs and operating procedures for the facility

Case Study 3 – Eva's Initiatives

Role of key players . . . cont'd

Participant type	Name	Role/Contribution
Community	The Wives of the Toronto Maples Leafs	$45,000 donation
	Homeless youth	Involved in all aspects of the design of the building and its programs
	All-A-Board Youth Ventures Inc.	Designed and built the furniture in the model unit
	Youthview Communications	Chronicling the development of Eva's Phoenix on video
Other	Faculty at the University of Manitoba	Documenting all aspects of the project for replication across Canada and North America
	Foundations and individuals	Provided donation

Construction budget as of January 10, 2000

Expenses	
Total construction costs	$2,100,000
Revenue	
City of Toronto	$500,000 (+building)
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.	$600,000 (RRAP)
CAW	$325,000
Provincial Homeless Initiatives	$100,000
Accessibility Funding	$50,000
Eva's Place	$50,000
Donations*	$4,000
Total	$1,629,000
Shortfall	($471,000)

* A corporate fundraising campaign has been launched. Gifts-in-kind (construction materials) were received totalling over $100,000. This is reflected in reduced construction costs above.

Case Study 3 – Eva's Initiatives

Training budget

Construction training: May 1999-February 2000

Expenses	
Wages, hard and soft skills	$864,500
Revenue	
Human Resources Development Canada	$639,500
Local 27, ISCA and IBPAT	$45,000
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities	$180,000
Total	$864,500
Variance	$0

Factors relating to success

- Combining a supportive living and working environment

Obstacles to success

- Lack of funding to build housing in Ontario

Lessons learned and transferability

- Develop partnerships with all levels of government, local businesses and corporations, labour, the community and social service agencies for support and to secure sufficient funding. In seeking partners, cast the net as wide as possible
- Clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each partner and ensure that there is commitment to a common goal. For example, decide who will address issues such as punctuality in the training program
- Develop training programs together with potential employers. Find out their needs and make sure the program will give students the skills to meet these needs. The key is to provide training in areas where the students are likely to find jobs
- Integrate the opinions of potential tenants into as many aspects of the development, programs and operations as possible to ensure relevance
- Have an open mind about working with potential tenants. This is important for counselors, trainers, construction crews and everyone else working on the project
- Work in ways that may not be traditional for the sponsor or partners
- Make sure the community is involved and supportive of the project

Similar initiatives

Unaware of any.

Case Study 3 – Eva's Initiatives

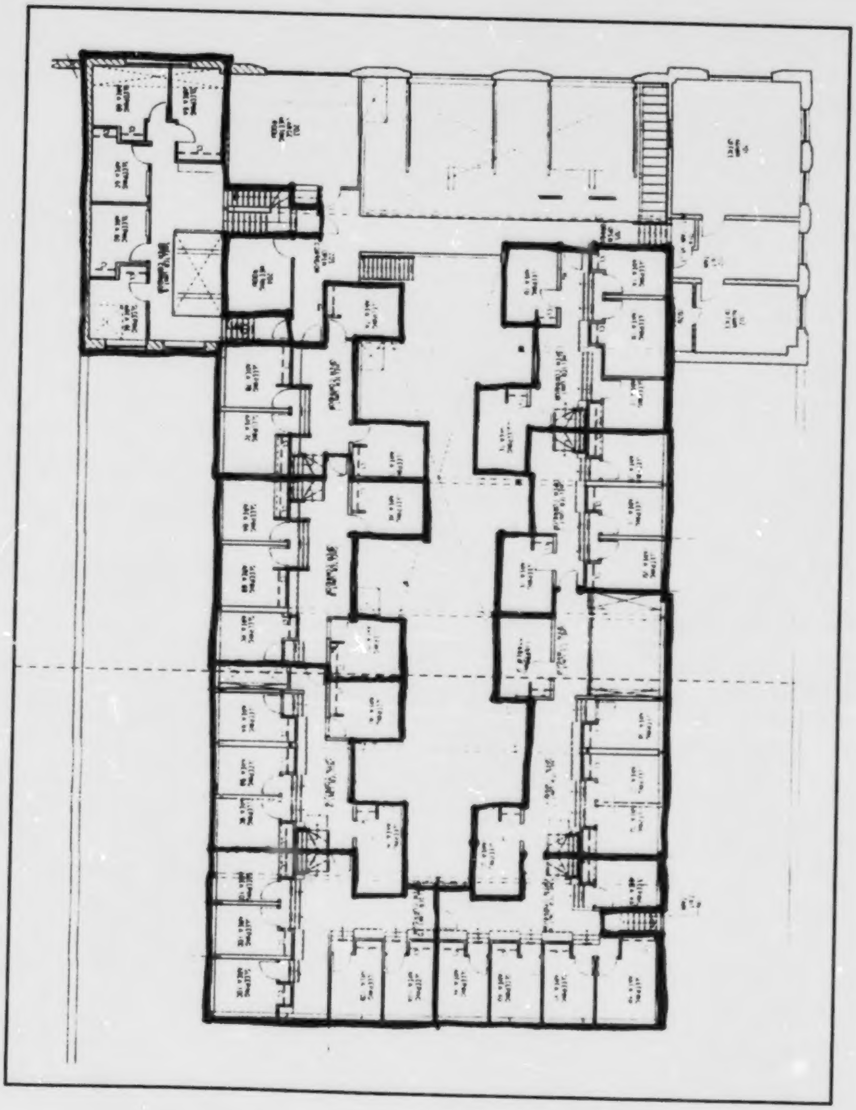
Contact

Rachel Gray, Community Outreach Coordinator
Jennifer Morris, Coordinator
Eva's Phoenix
11 Ordinance Street
Toronto ON M6K 1A1

Phone: 416-364-4716
Fax: 416-364-7533

Email: ephnix@ibm.net

A video is available on this initiative.



Central City Concern: A range of related services to address homelessness and chemical dependency

Unique aspect of this initiative

Central City Concern (CCC) is a non-profit organization in Portland, Oregon that offers emergency shelter, supportive housing and rental housing. This case study is an example of how a non-profit organization takes a multi-faceted approach to help individuals and families break the cycle of homelessness and addiction to become self-sufficient. CCC links housing, chemical dependency treatment, employment and other services.

Background

CCC was created in 1979 with funding from the City of Portland, Multnomah County and the federal government to address homelessness. The County also wanted to address drug and alcohol addictions. A variety of programs was developed incrementally over the past 20 years.

CCC is located in North Burnside, the most economically depressed part of the inner city with much of Portland's SRO stock. It is comparable to the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. CCC has been given much of the credit for keeping the area liveable for all residents. The streets are clean, very few people are visibly drunk and a variety of businesses operate there.

"Bricks and Mortar"

CCC provides 1,200 units of housing in 16 buildings, mostly in SROs, for single individuals and some families. It also serves individuals with special needs, including mental illness, drug and alcohol misuse and HIV/AIDS. About half the units are drug and alcohol-free supportive housing.

There are 140 units of transitional housing for individuals who are homeless and enter a substance misuse treatment program. Tenants may stay in this housing during outpatient treatment or following residential treatment. If they relapse, they must leave the housing. CCC helps individuals who complete treatment to relocate to longer term housing.

CCC provides 460 units of permanent supportive housing that is drug and alcohol free. Tenants must be engaged in an ongoing program of recovery. Oregon law makes it possible for CCC to have an expedited evictions policy, which allows for one relapse and one remedy for that relapse. Very few evictions have taken place.

As a non-profit society, CCC provides 600 low-income housing units where tenants may use alcohol in their rooms but not in common areas. Illegal drug use is not tolerated on the premises.

Rents in both the supportive and non-profit units range from $255-$380 (US) per month.

Services to tenants

An **outreach van** cruises Portland to pick up individuals who are intoxicated, incapacitated, on the streets and willing to go to the Sobering Centre. About 90% of calls to the Central City Concern Hooper Inebriate Response Service (CHIERS) are from police, although the van responds to calls from businesses, community organizations and citizens.

The **Sobering Centre** is open 24 hours per day all year long. The centre gives individuals a safe, warm place to sober up or get straight. Individuals are discharged when they can care for themselves, usually after six or seven hours. In the early years, the majority of clients were homeless. By 1999, about half the clients were homeless. The Sobering Centre performs more of a life safety than a rehabilitation function.

The **Hooper Detoxification Centre** offers a five- to seven-day sub-acute medical detoxification program and can accommodate 52 people at one time. Its mission is to move individuals from addiction to treatment and recovery. Physicians are available every day. The program includes discussion groups, Alcoholic Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings, and information sessions. Mandatory acupuncture on a daily basis is a cornerstone of the program. It is used to manage pain during withdrawal, decrease cravings for drugs, and boost the body's immune system to generate better health.

Alcohol and drug outpatient treatment is provided at the **Portland Alternative Health Centre**, located in a corner storefront space of one of Central City Concern's housing developments. The Alternative Health Centre also provides many of the same health care services as the Hooper Detoxification Centre. About 400 individuals are treated at the outreach clinic for substance misuse at any one time. There are 140 units of transitional housing available for individuals who are homeless and undergoing treatment.

The **Letty Owings Centre** has a six-month residential treatment program with 40 beds that provides comprehensive, intensive residential and continuing care services for women who are homeless, pregnant or have young children. Employment training services are integrated into the program. This program is followed by the provision of alcohol and drug-free housing in the community.

Employment Initiatives

The Workforce Program teaches the life skills and tools necessary to sustain full-time employment and permanent housing. Services are available to residents of city shelters, SRO housing, Portland's westside, and individuals who are homeless, including veterans.

Central City Concern opened two new business ventures in 1999: a retail thrift store, and a painting and maintenance business. These ventures provide paid training and work experience for individuals who were previously homeless. The businesses generate revenue to fund other programs and services provided by Central City Concern.

Case Study 4 – Central City Concern

Role of key players

Participant	Name	Role/Contribution
Non-profit society	Central City Concern	Responsible for the programs and services
Governments	City of Portland	One of the initiators of the non-profit society and CCC projects. Provides funding
	Multnomah County	One of the initiators of the non-profit society and CCC projects. Provides funding
	State and Federal	Provide funding

Financial information

Revenue	U.S. Dollars	Percent
Federal funds	$3,613,500	33%
Rent Income	$2,956,500	27%
Fees	$1,971,000	18%
Private funds	$1,314,000	12%
State and local funds	$1,095,000	10%
Total	$10,950,000	100%

Note: percentages are based on 1997-98 actual figures. Amounts are based on six months of actual figures, July to December 1999.

Factors relating to success

Links between housing, treatment for substance abuse, employment and other services.

Major obstacles or barriers

Funding program did not always match program needs. It was often necessary to convince funding agencies to link recovery and homeless projects.

Lessons learned and transferability

- Housing and support services go hand in hand when helping people overcome addiction
- For individuals recovering from addictions, alcohol and drug-free housing has the biggest potential to help them change their lives. Just providing affordable housing is not sufficient
- It is necessary to have sufficient detoxification facilities to give individuals a place to start addressing their chemical dependency
- There is a need for a range of housing and support options

Case Study 4 – Central City Concern

Similar Initiatives

The Salvation Army and Gospel Mission in Vancouver have similar objectives to provide a range of housing, including detox/treatment, combined with lifeskills and job counselling.

Contact

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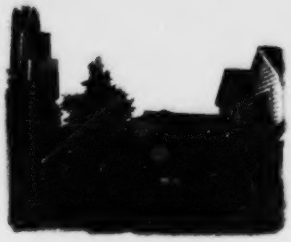
Central City Concern
2 NW Second Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97209

Phone: 503-294-1681
Fax: 503-294-4321

Email: richardh@transport.com



Portland Hotel Society: Housing for those with no other housing options

Unique aspect of this initiative

The Portland Hotel Society in Vancouver has a management philosophy and commitment to accommodate individuals who have difficulty finding and remaining in housing. This project has a policy whereby eviction is used only as a last resort. The primary objective is to stabilize housing for a group who have previously been in a cycle of homelessness.

Background

In 1991, the Portland Hotel initiative began when the Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) saw an opportunity to preserve the housing stock. DERA negotiated an agreement with the hotel owners and hired staff to manage the building.

In 1993, the Portland Hotel Society was incorporated and eventually took on the responsibility of the Portland Hotel operations. The Portland Hotel Society identified a gap in housing for individuals considered the hardest of the hard to house.

Tenants at the Portland Hotel include single persons and couples who are able to live independently with or without support services. Many are mentally ill, are addicted to drugs or alcohol, or are both. They are extremely poor and often have a variety of serious physical illnesses, including repeated cullulitis infections, hepatitis, pneumonia and HIV/AIDS.

On average, those living at the Portland Hotel have had three addresses in the year prior to moving in. In 1999, the average length of stay at the Portland was close to four years. This length of stay indicates that the housing environment is helping the tenants achieve greater stability in their lives.

The Portland Hotel Society began its management approach at the Portland Hotel, and is currently operating the Sunrise, Washington and Regal Hotels in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The society is also the non-profit sponsor for the New Portland Hotel, which replaced the existing Portland Hotel in August 2000.

"Bricks and Mortar"

The Portland Hotel is a 5-storey building in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. It has 69 rooms ranging from 150 to 250 square feet, each with a sink and fridge. Each floor has one shared shower, two shared toilets, and a communal kitchen. The hotel has a small lobby area with a television, where tenants sit and socialize. There is a laundry room as well as a small events room, medical clinic and small kitchen. Rent is equal to the BC Benefits shelter allowance.

The Portland Hotel Society has a management agreement with the owners of the Portland Hotel that expires mid-2000. Given the long-term instability of the arrangement, the society began to work on the New Portland Hotel.

Case Study 5 – Portland Hotel

The New Portland Hotel includes 87 units with:

- 60 studio units with a private toilet and shower, bar fridge and sink
- 6 one-bedroom units with a bathroom and kitchenette
- 8 wheelchair accessible units, each with a bathroom and full kitchen
- 12 one-bedroom units with bathrooms and full kitchens
- 1 two-bedroom self-contained emergency unit on the main floor

The New Portland Hotel was also designed to have a common kitchen, laundry facility and lounge area on each floor, a cafeteria for tenants on the main floor, a TV lounge in the front entrance, a large multi-purpose room, a number of small meeting rooms and one elevator. Space is available for health services to be provided on site.

Services to tenants

- Mental health workers are employed by the Portland Hotel Society to provide 24-hour staffing. They manage and maintain the building, and are responsible for working with tenants. The Greater Vancouver Mental Health Services Society (GVMHSS) funded these staff until April 2000, when the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board took over its services
- Four full-time home support staff work a pooled number of hours to provide personal care to tenants. Through this innovative model of service delivery, the Portland Hotel Society recruits and trains staff, although they are employed by a downtown home support agency
- A doctor and nurse are available five days a week. They are both contracted to work with the Portland Hotel Society through the Vancouver Richmond Health Board

In addition, the Portland Hotel Society contracts for a variety of other services. These include:

- A nutritionist, working with tenants who are physically ill and underweight
- Counselling
- Massage, acupuncture therapy, podiatry
- An art group and poetry group, facilitated by local artists and poets
- A hair stylist

The society operates an extensive events schedule.

All of these services are continuing at the New Portland Hotel.

Case Study 5 – Portland Hotel

Role of key players

Participant Type	Name	Role/Contribution
Private sector	Portland Hotel Owner	Entered into agreement with community groups to operate SRO hotel
Community agencies	Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA)	Identified the opportunity to provide housing at the Portland Hotel and entered into an arrangement with the owner to rent the rooms
Non-profit society	Portland Hotel Society	Responsible for this initiative. Determined the group of people to be served, and set goals. Works with community agencies to access services and to cooperate in advocating to meet the needs of the tenants. The Board of Directors is also involved in fundraising
	Greater Vancouver Mental Health Services Society (GVMHSS)	Supported this initiative right from the start as part of a continuum of services. Provided the funding to make it possible to have 24-hour staffing
Health authority	Vancouver/Richmond Health Board	Provides funding for a variety of services through its Hospice Program (doctor, nurse, medical supplies) and its Alcohol and Drug Respite Detox Program (e.g. massage and acupuncture therapy); continued GVMHSS programs after April 2000
Provincial government	BC Housing	Funded capital and operating costs
	Ministry of Health	Worked with the Portland Hotel Society to provide a unique model of home support delivery

Many organizations are involved in providing funding for the new building being developed by the Portland Hotel Society. The City of Vancouver provided the land at a discounted cost. The provincial government provided funding through the Ministries of Attorney General, Health, and Social Development and Economic Security, including BC Housing. The GVMHSS, the Real Estate Foundation, the Vancouver Foundation, the Central City Mission Foundation and the federal government also provided funding.

Portland Hotel budget 1999/2000

Revenue	
Tenant Rent	$252,594
GVMHSS	$324,114
BC Housing	$50,000
Donations	$2,600
Total	$629,308

Case Study 5 – Portland Hotel

Portland Hotel budget 1999/2000

Expenses	
Staffing costs (e.g. wages, benefits, training)	$159,153
Building operational costs (e.g. rent/mortgage, utilities, appliances)	$187,436
Repairs and maintenance (e.g. supplies, labour, plumbing)	$173,487
Residential operational costs (e.g. food/beverage, activities)	$24,414
Residential service/supplies – in house	$1,261
Administration (centralized admin costs, accounting, audit)	$83,557
Total	$629,308

Factors relating to success

- Setting realistic goals, and being persistent in achieving these goals
- Having a flexible approach – trying different solutions to address issues
- Making services fit the people instead of people fit the services
- Providing extensive staff development programs

Major obstacles or barriers

- The condition of the building, which is old and run down
- A lack of funding for food and other types of assistance that would benefit tenants
- Gaps in programs and funding; a lack of flexibility to meet the needs of tenants

Lessons learned and transferability

- Developing partnerships with as many organizations in the community as possible, including service agencies, community groups and police, helped build support. Working with others helped build trust. If other organizations know you can help them deal with issues they face, they are often willing to provide services or funding support as needed
- Developing a coordinated service delivery model that would work for the tenants took a great deal of time (five years) and required a great deal of flexibility on behalf of sponsors and funding agencies
- Having staff that are trained, respectful and patient contributes to the success

Case Study 5 – Portland Hotel

Similar initiatives

Unaware of any

Contact

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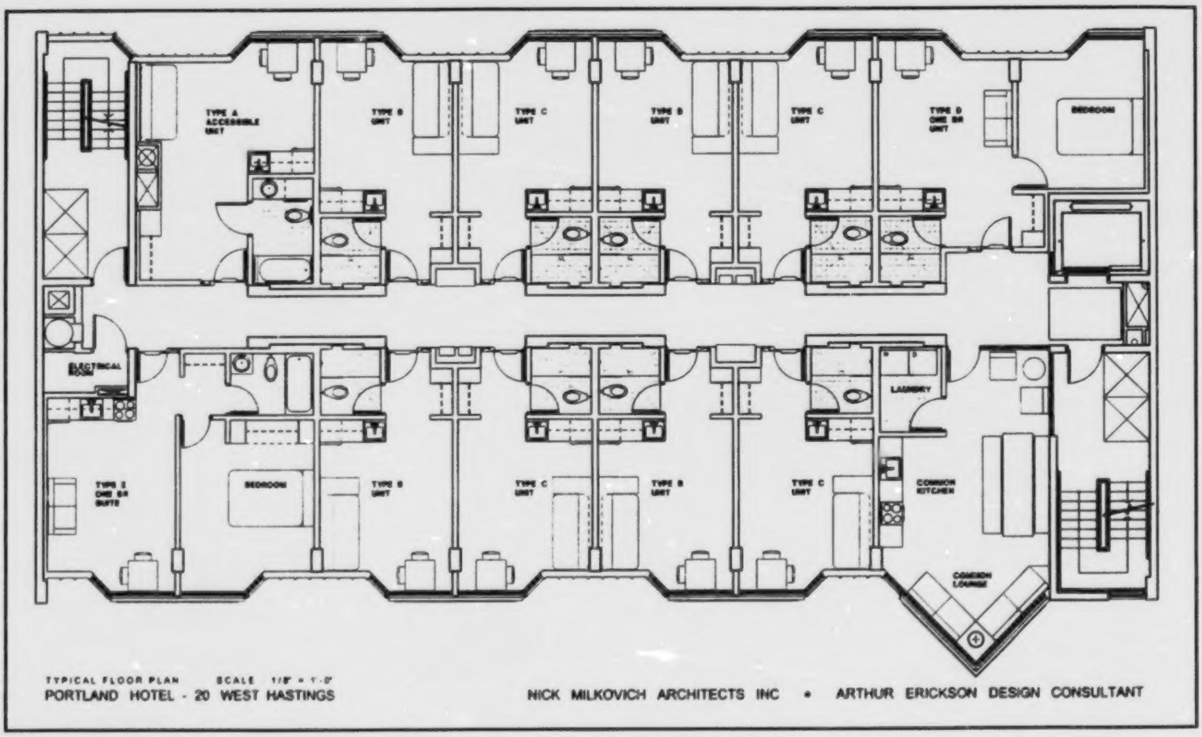
TYPE A ACCESSIBLE UNIT
TYPE B UNIT
TYPE C UNIT
TYPE B UNIT
TYPE C UNIT
TYPE D ONE BR UNIT
BEDROOM
ELECTRICAL ROOM
LAUNDRY
TYPE E ONE BR SUITE
BEDROOM
TYPE B UNIT
TYPE C UNIT
TYPE B UNIT
TYPE C UNIT
COMMON KITCHEN
COMMON LOUNGE
TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"
PORTLAND HOTEL - 20 WEST HASTINGS
NICK MILKOVICH ARCHITECTS INC • ARTHUR ERICKSON DESIGN CONSULTANT

5.5 Converting SRO hotels and motels to non-profit management

5.5.1 The need to protect existing SROs

The need to protect and improve the supply of Single Room Occupancy hotels (SROs) was clearly identified by the provincial government's Lower Income Urban Singles (LIUS) Task Group in its 1995 report **Nowhere to Live**. The task group recommended several strategies which local governments can use:

- Adopt Standards of Maintenance Bylaws to encourage repair and prevent further physical deterioration of the housing stock used by individuals most at risk of homelessness – SRO hotels, motels and rooming houses
- Recognize in local government housing and planning policies that SROs are a critical part of the rental market
- Monitor how trends are effecting SRO stock by tracking the number, condition, conversions, demolitions and redevelopment of SRO units

> SRO[illegible] [illegible] the [illegible] market

SRO stock is best protected when community groups work with business and/or governments.

Some private SRO owners are committed to providing well managed accommodation independently or in partnership with emergency shelter providers. For example, Lookout Emergency Aid Society in Vancouver has a standing agreement with the owner to use 35 rooms at the Hazelwood Hotel. It provides an on-site tenant support worker to help the clients maintain their stability in the community.

5.5.2 Acquisition of SROs

Government or non-profit socieity purchase of SROs, combined with management of the SRO hotel by a non-profit society, is a very effective way to protect this housing stock. It also addresses problems faced by tenants, including security of tenure, long-term affordability, safety, privacy and security.

An example of community groups and government agencies forming a partnership to maintain SRO hotels is the 1998 purchase of the **Sunrise** and **Washington Hotels** in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Community groups were concerned about mortality, health, inadequate housing, homelessness and crime in the area. The Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, City of Vancouver, and the provincial government formed a multi-agency partnership. In addition, the federal government, through the CMHC's RRAP program, provided funding for rehabilitation work. The goal was to offer stability to tenants, improve their quality of life and reduce the overall costs of health and social services.

The **Metropole** in Vancouver involves the conversion and upgrade of an old hotel to create 60 self-contained units. This initiative was sponsored by the Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) in partnership with a private developer, and involved the use of RRAP funding.

Examples from outside the Lower Mainland include the **Lakeside** in Nelson, **McQuaid Place** in Prince George, and **Mediwiwin** in Victoria.

McQuaid Place is the renovated Jacob's Inn motel and provides 16 units of housing for single men and women. Before the conversion, most of the motel units served low income tenants on a month-to-month basis; some were used for tourists. To qualify to live in McQuaid Place, tenants must be able to live independently. The non-profit society managing the motel helps tenants link up with services they need in the community.

Most examples include funding from a variety of partners. Those with the broadest base of funding support are most likely to succeed.

The following case studies show how non-profit societies provide supportive housing in SRO hotels and motels.

The Regal Hotel: Acquisition of an SRO hotel and conversion to non-profit management

Unique aspects of this initiative

The Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation (GVHC) purchased an older downtown hotel that had been left vacant to demonstrate that a non-profit society can sometimes obtain housing for low income tenants without the financial support of senior levels of government. This case study is an example of a partnership between non-profit agencies and a health authority.

Background

When the GVHC purchased the Regal, a Hastings Street hotel closed by the City of Vancouver due to substandard living conditions and illegal activities on the premises, the Vancouver/ Richmond Health Board (VRHB) suggested a partnership. The VRHB was already a partner with the City of Vancouver and BC Housing in the purchase and conversion to non-profit management of two nearby hotels – the Washington and the Sunrise. The VRHB offered to provide support services for individuals who were chronically homeless before being housed in the Regal.

In April 1999, with this partnership in place, the GVHC began extensive renovations including:

- Rebuilding the bathrooms in each unit
- Providing each unit with a small kitchen and new appliances
- Installing new flooring
- Opening closed windows
- Installing new alarm systems

The Regal opened in March 2000.

Both the GVHC and the VRHB make important financial contributions to the operations of the building. The GVHC covers mortgage payments and basic building operations using tenant rent contributions, as well as the salary of one full-time employee for the management agency. The VRHB provides annual operating funds, which allow for 24-hour staffing. The two partners have an open book policy with the operations of the building, and together review finances annually.

The Portland Hotel Society (PHS) supplies support services and day-to-day management, including tenant selection. For the Regal, the PHS has modified its no-eviction approach; instead it tries to relocate tenants before eviction occurs. The GVHC is responsible for major maintenance and evictions.

The agreements between the GVHC, the VRHB and the PHS were accomplished simply and quickly. The parties clearly laid out their goals and objectives, and they negotiated in good faith with an understanding that appropriate written contracts would follow.

Case Study 6 – Regal Hotel

The GVHC has a policy of providing pre-apprenticeship and training opportunities for youth living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The GVHC hired Tradeworks for the Regal Hotel renovations. This community group provided on-site construction supervision, a job foreman, trainees to undertake demolition and simple renovations, and worked with the GVHC to sub contract trades and manage the sequencing of the work.

"Bricks and Mortar"

The eight-storey hotel has 40 rooms and 25 feet of street frontage. The building exceeds the allowable floor space ratio for the neighbourhood, and if demolished a smaller building would go up in its place.

When renovations are complete, all suites will have private bathrooms and cooking facilities.

- The ground floor will be used by the City as a space to provide services to the community
- The second floor will have a small office, a laundry room, three self-contained small suites and one 500-square-foot one-bedroom unit
- The remaining six floors have a total of 12 rooms at 175 sq. feet and 24 rooms ranging from 275 sq. feet to 385 sq. feet

To accommodate a closet-sized kitchen in the 175 sq. foot rooms, floor space was taken from the adjoining larger rooms. One of the larger rooms was set aside for use as a common room for the building.

There will be a card-lock security system and video surveillance equipment which allows the PHS to monitor remotely. If the monitoring and security systems prove effective, the partners will consider reducing the level of staff coverage.

Role of key players

Participant Type	Name	Role/Contribution
Non-profit society	Greater Vancouver Housing Corporation	Project initiator, owner and lead operator
Local government	City of Vancouver	Provided encouragement and leased the ground floor for a community project
Health authority	Vancouver/Richmond Health Board	Provides operating funding for support services
Community group	Tradeworks	Provided pre-apprentice training opportunities, on-site construction supervision, a job foreman, the sequencing of work, and subcontracting of specialized trades.
Service agency	Portland Hotel Society	Selects tenants, provides day-to-day property management and support services
Volunteers	Bob Potegal, Architect	After designing the renovations, he donated his services to provide additional co-ordinating time

Case Study 6 – Regal Hotel

Services to tenants

- Linkage to health services at the Portland Hotel, such as the sessional physician and the community health nurse
- Home support services similar to those offered at the Portland, Washington and Sunrise Hotels

Financing

Capital Cost

Cost Item	Amount
Acquisition of building	$1,090,000
Rehab Costs	$620,000
Total	$1,710,000

Operating costs

The GVHC will provide one full-time position as part of an estimated cost of $110,000/year and additional staff support to manage major maintenance for the building. The VRHB will fund at least one additional full-time staff position.

Factors relating to success

- Committing enough time to the project to make it successful
- Trusting partners to work out details while proceeding
- Bringing a short list of requirements to early discussions to reduce the level of complexity of the negotiations

Major obstacles or barriers

- Because the building was old, unforeseen deficiencies were found during renovations, leading to cost overruns
- Securing the building during renovations was difficult due to the neighbourhood's street problems

Lessons learned and transferability

- Time would have been saved if the partners in the Regal Hotel already had a working relationship before starting the project
- The partnership allowed for increased services and building upgrades from what was originally thought feasible, and for individuals who were at higher risk of homelessness to be accommodated
- Partners need to bring to the negotiations a relatively short list of expectations and must be prepared to be flexible
- Initial resources are needed to finance the design phase
- Renovations should be kept as simple as possible

Case Study 6 – Regal Hotel

Similar Initiatives

The Sunrise and Washington Hotels also provide housing for individuals who are at risk of homelessness. The Metropole, a similar hotel in the neighbourhood, is in the final stages of renovation. All of these SRO hotels are in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside.

Contact

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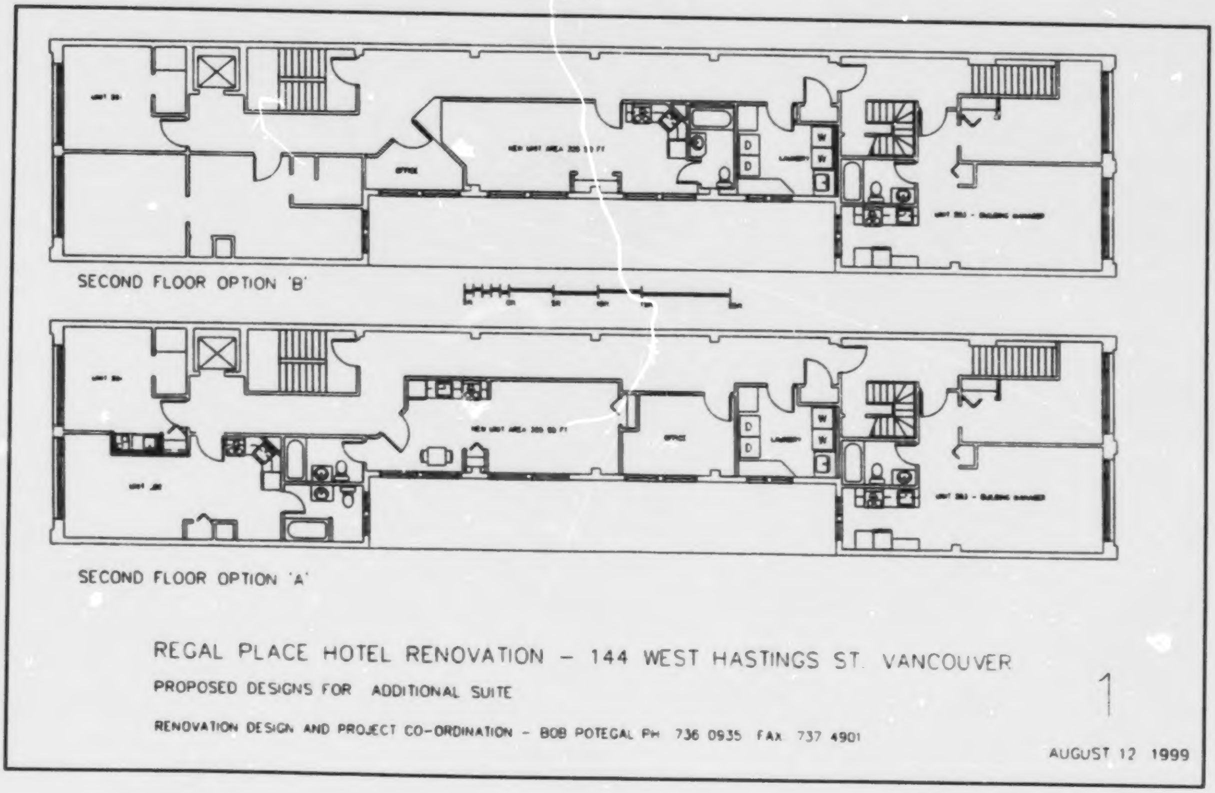
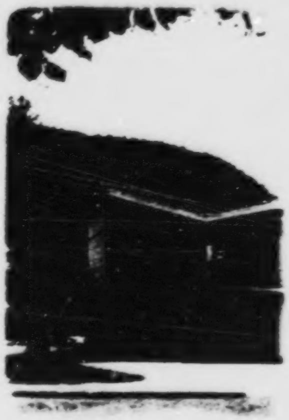


REGAL PLACE HOTEL RENOVATION – 144 WEST HASTINGS ST. VANCOUVER
PROPOSED DESIGNS FOR ADDITIONAL SUITE
RENOVATION DESIGN AND PROJECT CO-ORDINATION – BOB POTEGAL PH 736 0935 FAX 737 4901
AUGUST 12 1999

The Lighthouse: Conversion of an old motel to supportive housing



Unique aspects of this initiative

The Lighthouse is a converted motel, owned by the provincial government and once used as the Kamloops Community Correction Centre. Through the Lighthouse, the John Howard Society, Thompson Region (JHS), provides housing for tenants with histories of drug and alcohol use, mental disorders and chronic health issues related to abuse.

This project is an example of how a non-profit society converted a motel to supportive housing for low income individuals and families who have been in conflict with the justice system.

Background

The light in Lighthouse stands for its goals: Living in Good Health Today.

In April 1998, knowing this former motel to be vacant, the John Howard Society contacted the provincial government to see if it would rent them the building. The JHS then approached BC Housing for funding through the HOMES BC program, achieving conditional approval for the project in late 1998.

BC Housing acted as the development consultant to the JHS. This included co-ordinating final lease arrangements, design work and the construction trades. Renovations were completed by the end of October 1999 and the building was occupied on November 1, 1999.

"Bricks and Mortar"

Lighthouse is a two-storey cement block former motel with 18 units. Renovations to the building included the replacement of kitchens, appliances and bathrooms. It was repaired and painted inside and out, and new carpets and tile flooring were installed. The building consists of:

- 17 Fully furnished studio suites at 300 sq. feet
- 1 Fully furnished one-bedroom unit at 350 sq. feet
- Two offices, one used for administration, and the other for programs
- A common room
- Communal kitchen and dining area
- A laundry room

Case Study 7 – The Lighthouse

Services to tenants

There are three outreach workers, two working full-time and one working part-time, funded through contracts with the Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission, the provincial corrections branch (Probation) and the federal corrections branch. The staff work shifts with a three-hour overlap that allows two staff to make visits with clients in their suite or hold difficult counselling sessions. The JHS has arranged 24-hour emergency call by mental health services and local police.

Staff provide life skills training, counselling and make daily contact with all tenants. Outreach workers have regular contact with case managers for tenants who are connected to either the forensic clinic or probation services.

Although there is no meal program at the Lighthouse, tenants sometimes have potluck dinners in the communal kitchen. Tenants are encouraged to visit the outreach workers in the office for coffee or tea.

Twice weekly the federal corrections branch offers Counterpoint, a cognitive skills program to tenants and non-residents. The Laubach Literacy Society offers tutoring two times a week. Tenants have organized an association to deal with issues that arise in their complex.

Role of key players

Participant Type	Name	Role/Contribution
Non-profit society	John Howard Society, Thompson Region	Project initiator, sponsor and administrator
Government agencies	Forensic Psychiatric Services Commission	Funding through the Housing Outreach Project for support services to its clients
	Corrections (Probation)	Funding for support services to individuals on probation
	Federal Corrections	Funding for support services and the Counterpoint program
	BC Housing	Provided direction, renovation and operational funding through HOMES BC
Community group	Laubach Literacy Society	Teaches literacy to tenants
Community members		Donated household goods to furnish the suites

Financing

Capital cost – Acquisition and renovation

Cost Item	Amount	Details
Land	$1	Five-year lease
Rehab costs	$150,000	Includes soft costs
Demolition fund	$120,000	A reserve fund for when the lease expires, in trust at BC Housing
Total	$270,001	

Operating Costs – Budgeted for five months to year end

Expense	Amount	Details
Support services	$110,500	
Other	$25,000	Contingency fund for furniture replacement
Total	$135,500	

Factors related to success

- No re-zoning required
- No land use controversy
- The City of Kamloops fast tracked approvals
- BC Housing acted as development consultant and provided speedy funding approval
- Donations and support from community agencies and individuals
- Operational funding for support services from provincial and federal government agencies

Obstacles

Not having a building at the outset

Lessons learned and transferability

- Make sure that the initiative has broad support among the other agencies that provide services to potential tenants
- Select a location for the project that is appropriately zoned for the intended use, is close to the required amenities and services and will not result in neighbourhood resistance
- Dedicate support services and obtain an ongoing commitment for the services important to tenants

Similar Initiatives

Case Study 7 – The Lighthouse

The Mediwiwin in Victoria and McQuaid Place in Prince George

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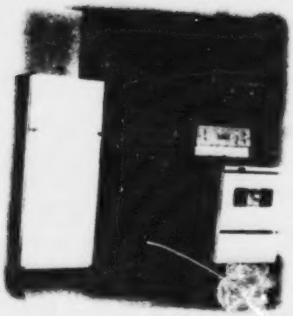


5.5.3 Converting non-residential buildings to non-profit housing

In some cases, non-profit societies may be able to find opportunities to acquire non-residential buildings and convert them to residential, as an alternative to new construction. If the building has been vacant or left to deteriorate, affordable rental housing that will be well managed and maintained may be welcomed as an improvement by neighbourhood property owners and residents. Eva's Phoenix in Toronto is an example of a light industrial site converted to low-rent housing (see case study page 35).

Local governments may wish to consider potential redevelopment sites when reviewing their Official Community Plans and zoning bylaws. Prezoning is one of the tools a local government has to allow a community to develop housing for low income residents.

5.6 New construction

5.6.1 Housing developed through HOMES BC

Since 1994, most low-income housing in B.C. has been developed through HOMES BC. Successful projects have the support of the municipality and many partners in the community. More information on HOMES BC is found in section 3.

New construction: Examples from Fernie, Nelson and Victoria

Chrysalis House, developed by the Elk Valley Family Society in Fernie, is an example of second stage housing with 11 self-contained units for women and their children leaving abusive homes or relationships. Funding for the building was provided through HOMES BC's Homeless/At Risk of Homelessness component (HARH).

The **Nelson Youth Housing project**, completed in May 1999, was also developed under the HARH component of HOMES BC to provide 10 apartments for 16-22 year olds. The sponsoring agency, Independence for Youth, saw that many young people were not able to find housing because of high rents and low vacancies. The agency also helps young people make the transition to market housing.

In 1997, the **Pandora Project** in Victoria was also developed under the HARH component of HOMES BC. It has 32 apartments for adults who were previously unable to acquire or maintain housing. There are also eight transitional housing units for youth. Many of the adults have physical disabilities or mental illness. Tenants are involved in many activities. They produce newsletters, sing in a choir and run community kitchens, art therapy sessions, camping trips and work searches.

5.6.2 Small suites

Small suites are one alternative in the spectrum of housing options for low income singles. These are generally self-contained apartments with a private bathroom and kitchen, as well as a combined living and sleeping area (no separate bedroom). Small suites can range from 180 sq. ft. (sometimes referred to as micro-suites) to 320 sq. ft. in size.

These units represent a departure from conventional social housing standards of about 400 sq.ft. for a studio/bachelor suite and 600 sq.ft. for a one bedroom apartment.

Some private and non-profit housing providers have shown interest in building small suites as the housing needs of lower income singles become more prominent. In the context of homelessness, a key element of small suites is that they be affordable to tenants with rents set at or close to the BC Benefits shelter allowance.

It may be economically feasible to produce small suites with rents at around $325 per month without provincial government involvement, although in some cases additional assistance or subsidy is needed to make the project financially viable.

> *"... one alternative in the spectrum of housing options"*

The concept of small suites is somewhat controversial. On one hand, this form of housing is seen as a means of responding to the large, unmet demand for adequate and affordable housing for lower income individuals. Small suites are also seen as a way of replacing existing SRO hotels, motels and rooming houses that are being lost due to conversion, demolition or redevelopment. They may also provide an alternative to the inadequate living conditions in existing SROs.

On the other hand, there are concerns that housing standards for lower income individuals and families may be eroded by small suites, especially in terms of liveability for tenants over the long term. Particular issues arise where achieving economic feasibility means reducing suite size, raising project density, and providing limited amenity space.

Several community forums have been held on small suites, and a range of views has been expressed. In Vancouver, the Carnegie Community Action Project, together with other community organizations, have developed recommendations around acceptable minimum sizes for small suites and test criteria for small suites under 320 square feet. This information can be obtained through the Carnegie Community Action Project at 604-689-0397.

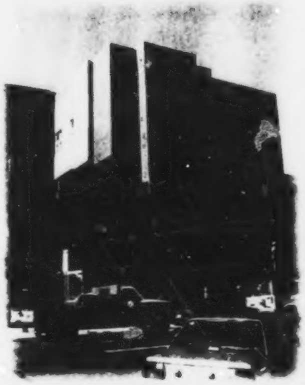
To date, private and non-profit sponsors are considering small suites developments in Vancouver, Kamloops and Victoria. In B.C., there is some degree of government funding in most new small suites projects. The following case study is an example of development without government capital funding. It has an initial operating subsidy.

Mike Gidora Place: A small suites development

Description of Initiative

Mike Gidora Place is a new small suites development that is both attractive and affordable to lower income urban singles in downtown Victoria. This case study is an example of developing low-rent housing without capital funding by senior governments.

Background



The Victoria Cool Aid Society has several housing developments, and looked to expand its portfolio with a small suites project. These had been discussed as a market housing option at the Minister's Advisory Committee on Affordable Housing Sub-committee on Lower Income Urban Singles when the society's executive director, Jane Dewing, chaired this group. Cool Aid staff member Mike Gidora generated broad support for a small suites project and found partners to allow the society to purchase the site next to another Cool Aid development in 1997. The next year, the City of Victoria granted an adjacent lot, and the development was redesigned to take advantage of an expanded site.

The project is named in memory of Mike Gidora, who died suddenly in 1999.

"Bricks and Mortar"

Mike Gidora Place contains 45 self-contained suites in three storeys and retail/commercial space on the ground floor.

- 40 studio units, each about 200 square feet with a 65 square foot storage loft
- 5 one-bedroom suites, each about 450 square feet with a 65 square foot storage loft. Three of the one-bedrooms have wheelchair accessible bathrooms and kitchens

Maximum natural light is used to create a greater sense of space. Thirty-three of the units have sliding glass doors that open onto European-style iron balconies. Nine units without sliding glass doors have two extra large windows. To further create a sense of space, all units have 12-foot high ceilings.

During the research stage of the project, prospective tenants confirmed that each unit should be self-contained, even if that did mean a reduction in floor space. Each suite has a full three-piece washroom and a kitchen area with stove/oven, fridge and cupboards. At the end of each kitchen counter is a fold down shelf, which can serve as additional counter space or as a table.

To create storage space without taking up floor area, each unit has an approximately 65 square foot storage loft. Under the stairs to the loft is a two-door closet that opens into a closet and set of shelves. Additional storage is provided in lockers in the basement.

Case Study 8 – Mike Gidora Place

All Cool Aid housing developments provide informal gathering spaces for tenants. On each floor of Mike Gidora Place, the elevator lobby is large enough to fit two couches and several chairs. This area has windows looking onto the neighbouring courtyard. A communal living room is adjacent to the laundry room. During the design phase, many prospective tenants said they would like to have a place where they could read or socialize while they did their laundry, since they were uncomfortable leaving their laundry unattended.

Services to tenants

The only services planned are those ordinarily provided by a resident caretaker. However, the proximity of Mike Gidora Place to the Downtown Community Activity Centre provides easy access to programs and opportunities for community involvement.

Role of key players

Participant Type	Name	Role/Contribution
Non-profit society	Victoria Cool Aid Society	Impetus, leadership, project coordination, financing
Financial institution	Pacific Coast Savings Credit Union	Financing
Foundations	Real Estate Foundation of B.C. VanCity Community Foundation Vancouver Foundation	Soft lending Soft lending Capital grant
Local government	City of Victoria	Land grant, valued at $250,000
Provincial government	BC Housing	Operational financing over 15 years
Federal government	CMHC	Homegrown Solutions grant for feasibility study and initial design

Financing

Total project costs were approximately $2.8 million, including $300,000 in land costs.

Mike Gidora Place was made possible through a diversity of financial partnerships, each with different financial parameters and criteria. The City of Victoria provided land to the project with an estimated value of $250,000. With the additional land the project moved from a three-storey to a four-storey building with a larger number of residential units and was able to add a basement and space for the Downtown Community Activity Centre expansion.

An additional $70,000, targeted for tenant improvements, may be allocated from Victoria Cool Aid Society Reserves.

BC Housing will provide $375,000 over fifteen years as operational financing to ensure that at least ten of the units are rented at the level of the BC Benefits

Case Study 8 – Mike Gidora Place

Confirmed financing

Name	Role/Contribution
Pacific Coast Savings Mortgage	$2,000,000 amortized over 25 years
Pacific Coast Savings Line of Credit	$300,000 overdraft with interest paid monthly
Real Estate Foundation 2nd Mortgage	$300,000 amortized over 7 years/payable over 6 years, $45,575 grant, which effectively reduces the interest rate from 6% to 1.36 per annum
CMHC Homegrown Solutions Grant	$18,800 for feasibility study and initial design costs
BC Housing	$375,000 over 15 years
Vancouver Foundation	$50,000 capital grant to assist in the expansion of the Downtown Community Activity Centre
Van City Community Foundation	$200,000 mortgage financing. Interest of 6% for full 25-year term Grant for first three years which will cover the first three years of principle and interest payments
Victoria Cool Aid Society	$135,000 cash

shelter allowance. Funds will be allocated to a maximum of $50,000 per year for the first seven years based on financial projections at the beginning of each year of operation.

Factors relating to success

- Broad support for social entrepreneurship in the agency and in the community
- Including people with architecture and finance backgrounds on the sponsoring agency's board of directors
- Collaborating with financial experts, consultants, and designers to solve problems, and the ability to bring partners to the table
- A trusted construction manager
- Constant review of cost savings

Lessons learned and transferability

- Having at least three financial partners, possibly including a local government or other organization with land granting capacity
- Having the lead non-profit agency ready in advance, with capacity for social entrepreneurship at the board and staff levels
- Having equity, provided by the non-profit society or through a bequeathment

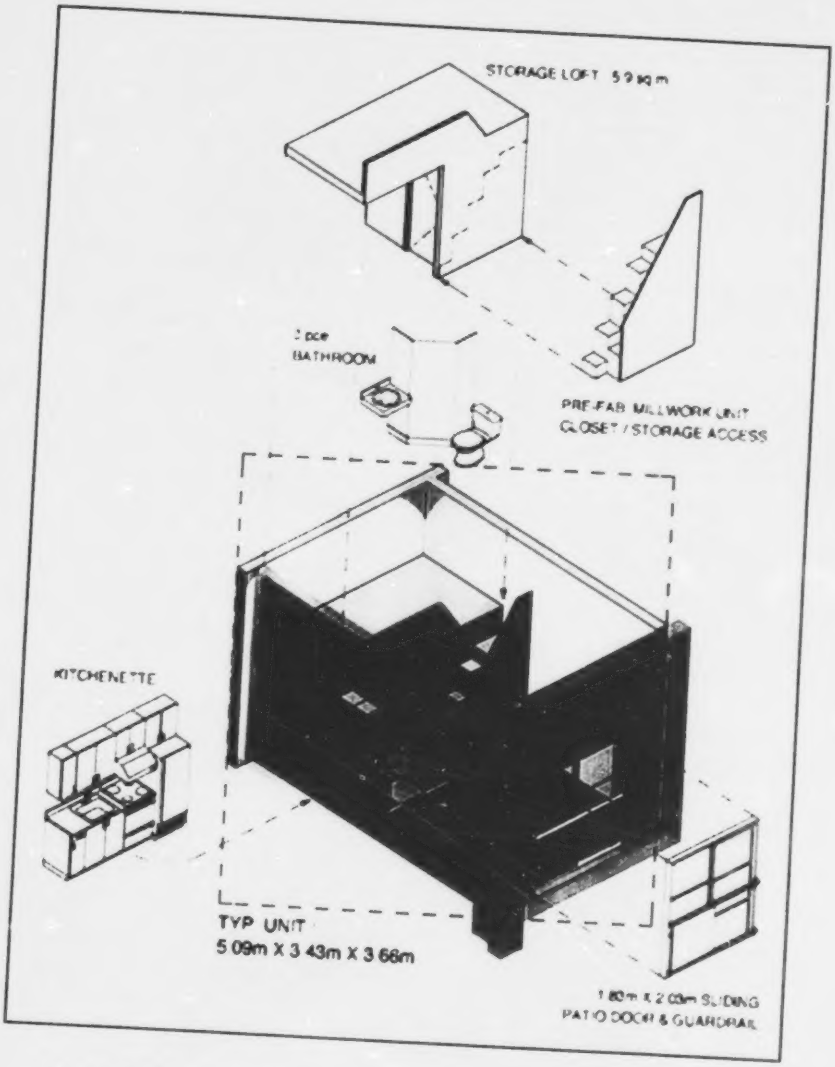
Part of the intent in developing Mike Gidora Place was to create a model that could be replicated elsewhere. The society learned that not relying on government funding meant that the lead organization had to invest heavily. Jane Dewing commented: "On top of our existing demands, the board and staff dedicated countless hours to this project. Without the extra commitment, we never would have secured funding or started construction."

Contact

Jane Dewing, Executive Director,
Victoria Cool Aid Society
469 Swift Street
Victoria BC V8W 1S2

Phone: 250-383-1977
Fax: 250-383-1639

Email: society@coolaid.org


STORAGE LOFT 5.9 sq m
2 pce BATHROOM
PRE-FAB MILLWORK UNIT
CLOSET / STORAGE ACCESS
KITCHENETTE
TYP UNIT
5.09m X 3.43m X 3.66m
1.80m X 2.03m SLIDING
PATIO DOOR & GUARDRAIL

5.7 Emergency shelter

In addition to provincial funding for shelters, important contributions are made by local governments, health authorities and community groups. Local governments assist in the location of shelters through inclusive zoning. Health authorities often provide services to people in need of emergency shelter. Community groups advocate for the continuum of housing options that range from emergency shelter to supportive housing to independent living. Community groups often serve as a catalyst in bringing all the partners together.

> *... provide shelter*
> *service that empowers, builds*
> *skills and links people*
> *to permanent housing*

Some shelter providers in B.C. deliver a range of services that go beyond meeting the need for a meal and a place to sleep. Others are developing creative strategies to provide shelter service in a manner that empowers, builds skills and links people to permanent housing. Some common themes are:

- Tenants provide feedback to the management of the service and/or assist as volunteers, rather than being passive recipients of service
- Tenants are actively supported in resolving the issues which have been factors in their homelessness through informal counselling, support groups, and referrals to appropriate community services
- Tenants are actively supported in preparing themselves to obtain secure, long-term employment. This could include academic upgrading, pre-employment programs, and job search training
- Tenants are actively supported in securing second stage or permanent housing

Abraham's Lodge: An example of sheltering chronically homeless individuals

Abraham's Lodge in Williams Lake provides 23 semi-self-contained rooms for individuals who are chronically homeless and a seven-bed emergency shelter. Individuals who are homeless, misuse substances, have a serious mental illness or fetal alcohol syndrome are among those who use the shelter.

In addition to shelter, Abraham's Lodge and Care Society provides food to tenants. Outreach services to First Nations communities in the Cariboo/Chilcotin region include children's school meals and distribution of food hampers, clothing, furniture and appliances.

The society uses a Medicine Wheel model of care that emphasizes meeting the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of tenants in a supportive atmosphere of healing and recovery. It provides lay counselling and lifeskills training, and uses elders as role models.

Lookout Shelter: An example of a minimal barrier shelter

Lookout Emergency Aid Society is located in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. It operates a licensed 42-bed emergency shelter funded by the provincial government and the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board, 39 units of long-term supportive housing, 103 units of permanent, self-contained housing and 50 units of self-contained housing in partnership with private landlords. Since 1996, Lookout has also operated a 50-bed winter-only shelter in southern Vancouver funded by many partners.

Lookout provides service to men and women with high health and social needs, including mental illness, drug and alcohol addictions, physical disabilities and chronic health problems such as HIV/AIDS. It operates a Drop In/Activity Centre for people with serious and persistent mental illnesses.

The majority of people seeking shelter at Lookout come from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and are referred from other agencies. The average stay is seven nights, but the actual length depends on individual circumstances. Lookout shortens the shelter stay by moving people to non-emergency housing. After an individual has moved to more permanent housing, outreach staff work with the person for up to six months.

Lookout provides services to its clients on a non-judgmental basis, but it reserves the right to refuse service to individuals who exhibit violence on the premises.

Quebec Street Shelter: An example of a low-barrier shelter service for women

Since 1995, Prince George's Association Advocating for Women and Children (AWAC) has been operating the Quebec Street Emergency Shelter for Women and Children. The shelter serves primarily adult women, but occasionally serves female youth and mothers with children. Many shelter users misuse substances, have mental illness, and may have been involved with police. The majority are victims of violence.

Quebec Street Shelter does not have restrictions on the types of clients it will serve. It serves those women who do not have access to the two other shelters for women in Prince George. Women are barred from the Quebec Street Shelter only for reasons of physical safety.

In the winter of 1999-2000, Quebec Street Shelter expanded its services to include a minimal barrier shelter for women who are intoxicated or otherwise difficult to serve. This is within the main shelter, but in a separate space. AWAC would like to make this a permanent, year-round service.

Peggy's Place: A facility for women with mental illness leaving violence

Peggy's Place, operated by The Kettle Friendship Society in East Vancouver, is a 10-bed shelter created for women with mental illness who have experienced violence. It is both a transition house and an emergency shelter. Tenants may stay up to six months.

Services provided at Peggy's Place include education, counselling, medication management, and advocacy. Program delivery is flexible in order to address each woman's individual situation. While in residence, women are supported in recovering from abuse, accessing health care services and dealing with practical aspects of their lives.

Streetlink: An example of client involvement in shelter service

The Victoria Cool Aid Society provides 55 beds in its Streetlink Emergency Shelter. People may stay a maximum of seven nights per month. Clients are typically in a cycle of homelessness and eviction. Many have mental health and substance misuse problems. The shelter also provides showers, laundry facilities and a cafeteria. Drop-in hours allow people living on the street to have a shower, make a telephone call, eat a meal and wash clothes. Nearly 1,300 people used the overnight shelter in 1999, and many more dropped in for services.

Streetlink clients volunteer in the kitchen, provide maintenance services, and help with chores such as laundry. Some volunteer at special events, such as programs on health education.

The Victoria Cool Aid Society has second stage and low-rent housing developments, which allows it to extend its support to the homeless beyond the Streetlink Shelter.

Covenant House: An example of a youth shelter

Covenant House Vancouver has an 18-bed shelter serving individuals between 19 and 22 years of age. It provides three meals a day, recreational outings, and daily contact with youth workers. In one year, the shelter program served 271 youth. Tenants are welcome to stay at Covenant House indefinitely, as long as they are working on their plan to get off the street.

5.7.1 Part of a continuum

Provision of emergency shelters is one of the range of housing options to reduce homelessness. Over-emphasizing this approach can lead to a situation of addressing short-term needs at the expense of long-term solutions, and may not be cost effective in the long run.

5.8 Summary

The range of strategies to address homelessness includes:

- Community involvement in planning and development, through public forums, multi-stakeholder working groups, task forces and community development processes
- Creating rent banks and special funds to help low income tenants avoid eviction because of unpaid rent
- Helping individuals break the cycle of homelessness and eviction through supportive housing, employment training and treatment for substance misuse
- Managing SRO hotels and motels by non-profit societies whose purpose is to offer stable housing for individuals at risk of homelessness
- Building new affordable housing
- Providing emergency shelter, and helping individuals using shelters secure and maintain independent homes

Local governments have a variety of tools to preserve and create affordable rental housing, including:

- Monitoring the housing stock used by individuals most at risk of homelessness
- Developing policies that promote a wide range of housing options, including residential hotels or motels, rooming houses and secondary suites
- Adopting Standards of Maintenance bylaws to protect existing housing
- Creating and using a housing reserve fund to assist in the preservation of SRO hotels, motels or rooming houses, or to encourage new affordable rental housing
- Negotiating housing agreements with developers to increase the number of new affordable housing units
- Providing land to non-profit societies for new affordable housing
- Fast-tracking development approvals

6

Developing Local Responses to Homelessness: A Summary

This section of the guide summarizes previous sections of this guide. It reviews:

- Roles and contributions of governments, community agencies, health authorities, the private sector and labour groups in addressing homelessness
- Tools and strategies, as well as things to think about
- Case studies

6.1 Roles & responsibilities

Each level of government, as well as the non-profit sector, community agencies, health authorities, businesses, and labour organizations have a role to play in addressing homelessness. The following is a summary of roles and activities described in this guide.

Federal government

- Research (e.g. Documentation of Best Practices Addressing Homelessness)
- Residential Rehabilitation Assistance Program (RRAP) (e.g. Sunrise, Washington and Metropole Hotels, Eva's Phoenix)
- Homegrown Solutions (e.g. Mike Gidora Place)
- Homelessness Initiatives announced in December 1999

Provincial government

- HOMES BC, provincially-funded non-profit housing program, with components for persons who are homeless or at risk of homelessness (HARH) and lower income urban singles (LIUS) as well as grants for advocacy groups through

Community Housing Initiatives (CHI)
- Subsidies to ensure that a portion of units developed outside of HOMES BC are affordable to low income households (e.g. Mike Gidora Place)
- Operating funds for emergency shelters
- Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER)
- Supported Independent Living Program (SILP) for people with mental illness living in private rental accommodation
- Research into homelessness and housing issues
- Information on possible responses to homelessness and tools to address and promote affordable housing
- Legislation to enable local governments to plan for affordable housing
- Legislation on landlord-tenant relationships
- Income assistance (BC Benefits)

Local governments

- Planning tools to preserve existing housing and to encourage new development
- Contributing funding
- Assisting in the purchase of land
- Donating a building or land
- Initiating ideas
- Providing strong council and staff support
- Assisting with the organization and administration involved in an initiative

Health authorities

- Identifying opportunities to support and provide assistance
- Recognizing the importance of stable housing in addressing the needs of individuals who have a mental illness
- Providing funding for the development of the new housing for individuals with mental illness or a variety of other health issues
- Providing assistance with funding of mental health care workers, home support workers and a variety of other programs
- Undertaking research

Community groups

- Initiating projects or programs to address homelessness
- Identifying needs, setting goals, developing a plan of action, and providing ongoing leadership
- Contributing time on a non-profit society board, donating labour, donating furnishings
- Providing input, advice and direction on projects initiated by others in the community
- Providing a variety of different services e.g., employment training, assistance with literacy, or other supports

Private sector

- Providing safe, secure, affordable housing
- Contributing materials or funding
- Assisting with fundraising
- Providing training and employment opportunities

Labour unions

- Contributing funding for training and other programs
- Providing training and employment opportunities

Foundations

- Providing funds for research and pilot projects

6.2 Tools, strategies and things to think about

The following table provides a summary of tools and strategies that can be used to address homelessness. It also provides a list of things to think about in deciding which approach would work best in your community.

Role of key players

Strategies	Things to think about
Understanding homelessness in your community • Obtain existing information from agencies and published sources • Count the non-sheltered homeless population • Count shelter clients • Create an inventory of SROs, motels, rooming houses • Survey SRO, motel, & rooming house occupants	• This is a good first step in developing a plan • In selecting an approach, think about the issues facing your community and what would work best given the resources available • Community groups may be more interested in participating if the research is combined with recommendations for action
Consultation and Planning • Public forums • Multi-stakeholder working groups • Housing task forces and committees • Community development processes • Evaluations	• Inclusive consultation and effective planning contribute to community building and are vital in developing local initiatives to address homelessness. Gathering and using input from a variety of different perspectives can build broad support. People and organizations that could potentially create opposition (NIMBY) may become proponents if they are involved from the start • Leadership, organization, coordination and ongoing consultation with constituent groups are necessary for success
Local government tools • Policies to maintain SROs • Standards of maintenance bylaws • Condominium conversion control • Housing agreements • Housing reserve funds • Density bonusing • Comprehensive development zoning • Fast tracking development approvals • Provision of land • Secondary suite policies	• These tools can assist in the preservation and creation of affordable housing • May have potential to create housing for low income individuals and families, if combined with funding from other levels of government • Negotiations for affordable housing units as part of a rezoning proposal can result in publicly-owned units with no public subsidy
Avoiding economic evictions • Inform tenants of rights and obligations • Help tenants negotiate with landlords or mediate a settlement • Provide tenants with loan or grant to pay overdue rent • Link tenants with services that will help them find other housing	• May be a cost effective alternative to having people end up in the shelter system • Requires a source of funds to help people in crisis avoid economic evictions (e.g., rent bank to provide loans or grants) • Tenants may remain in an at-risk situation if they are paying more than 50% of their incomes to rent due to a lack of affordable alternatives * Note: In B.C., a crisis grant may be available to families receiving BC Benefits to pay rent if they are facing eviction.

Strategies	Things to think about
Breaking the cycle of homelessness • Find permanent solutions to address underlying issues related to homelessness • Commitment to help residents retain their housing • Support tenants with home care, health care or life skills services	• Additional support can help people to achieve stability and become integrated into the community. • Requires both appropriate housing and the necessary services. In the case of chemical dependency, the availability of drug and alcohol-free housing is seen as critical for continued recovery • Youth require transition housing while participating in employment and life skills training • Health authorities can play a pivotal role in the success of projects • Funding is critical for both the housing and the support programs, e.g., treatment, life skills training and employment initiatives
Converting residential hotels or motels to non-profit management • Conversion to non-profit management of SROs hotels, motels and rooming houses that provide housing to low income individuals and families • Conversion of non-residential structure to rental housing • Lease of entire SRO hotel or motel • Lease of several floors or wings of SRO hotel or motel • Purchase, through partnerships with non-profit societies, governments and/or private sector	• Can ensure the preservation of existing housing for low-income households • Can help to address issues such as security of tenure, long-term affordability, safety, privacy and security by allowing a non-profit housing society to concentrate on addressing the needs of tenants • In most cases, government assistance is necessary. Depending on the renovations needed, societies should consider applying for RRAP funding • Partnerships on support programs may also be necessary. For example, funding from the local health authority can make it possible to serve individuals who were chronically homeless and in poor health • Can be a more cost-effective approach than new construction. Depending on the property, it may be possible for the sponsoring society to acquire a property without senior government assistance. The groups may be able to contribute some of their own equity or rents could be sufficient to cover operating costs • Depending on the existing zoning, it may be easier to gain community support than building new. If the building has been vacant or left to deteriorate, affordable rental housing that will be well managed and maintained may be welcomed as an improvement

Strategies	Things to think about
New construction - Develop partnerships	- Seek funding from a variety of partners, including federal, provincial and local governments, health authorities, the private sector, foundations, unions and community groups - If you're considering small suites, be aware of the controversy. Although they provide a response to the large, unmet demand for housing by low income single persons, there is concern that the introduction of small suites could erode housing standards. There are also questions about whether small suites are suitable over the long-term for many individuals
Emergency shelters - Operating funds from different government agencies, and social services depending on the needs of the people seeking shelter	- Providing emergency shelter can be an important element of an overall strategy and response to homelessness - Over-emphasizing this approach can lead to a situation of addressing short-term needs at the expense of long-term solutions, and may not be cost effective in the long run

6.3 Case study summary

Initiative	Special features	Key success factors	Obstacles	Lessons for transferability
Understanding Homelessness in Muskoka, Ontario	• Rural municipality • Research and action combined • Local issues guided research	• Involvement of community agencies from start • Visible change early in process provincial and community support programs	No obstacles	• Many community agencies must be involved • Take action as soon as problem is identified • Staff should be familiar with provincial and community support programs
Cool Waters Port Alberni, B.C.	• Diverse interests working together • Resolving neighbourhood resistance	• Strong community and local government support together with provincial funding • Consultative approach • Neighbourhood involvement • Seeing potential tenants as having skills and assets, not just needs	No major obstacles	• Funding for housing units • Respect the people to be served • Build trust • Community driven
Central City Concern Portland, Oregon	Continuum of services to break cycle of homelessness	• Embraces culture of recovery • Appropriate alcohol and drug free housing	Gaps in funding programs to meet needs of the tenants	• Housing and support services go hand-in-hand when helping people overcome addiction • Need sufficient detox facilities to start addressing drug and alcohol dependency • Need a range of housing and support options
Eva's Phoenix Toronto, Ontario	Housing and employment training for youth to break cycle of homelessness	• Supportive living and working environment • Ongoing follow-up support	Lack of funding in Ontario to build housing	• Develop partnerships for support and funding; cast the net as wide as possible • Develop training programs with potential employers • Clearly define roles and responsibilities • Integrate the opinions of potential tenants into as many aspects of the development, programs and operations as possible to ensure relevance • Open-mindedness about working with client group • Work in ways that may not be traditional for sponsors or partners • Involve the community

Initiative	Special features	Key success factors	Obstacles	Lessons for transferability
Portland Hotel Vancouver, B.C.	• No eviction policy for the hard-to-house • Supportive housing in SRO hotels	• Setting realistic goals • Flexible approach – trying different solutions to address issues • Making services fit people • Staff development programs	• Building in poor condition • Lack of funding for food and other assistance • Gaps in programs and funding	• Develop partnerships with many community organizations • Leave time to develop programs – service delivery model took five years to develop • Have staff that are trained, respectful and patient
Regal Hotel Vancouver, B.C.	• Partnership of non-profit housing agency and health authority • Training and apprenticeship program	• Committing enough time to the initiative • Flexibility and trust between partners • Short list of requirements in negotiations	• Unforeseen deficiencies in old building during renovations led to cost over-runs • Securing the building during renovations was difficult due to neighbourhood street problems	• Time would have been saved if the partners had a working relationship before this development • Partnership enabled increased services to be provided • Partners need to be flexible • At least one partner must have the resources to finance up-front costs • Keep renovations simple
Lighthouse Kamloops, B.C.	Offering housing and broad range of services	• Rezoning not required • Quick BC Housing approval • City expedited building permit approvals • Operational funding for support services • Community support (including donations)	• Not having a building at the outset	• Initiative needs broad community and agency support • Suitable location appropriately zoned to avoid community opposition • Dedicated support services
Mike Gidora Place - Small Suites Victoria, B.C.	Creation of affordable small suites without building subsidy from senior governments	• Broad support for social entrepreneurship • Strong board capacity • Collaborative problem-solving • Trusted construction manager • Frequent cost reviews	No major obstacles	• At least three financial partners • Board and staff prepared in advance for project • Equity from community group or other source • Availability of funding for up-front costs

APPENDIX A

Community initiatives that respond to homelessness: Who to contact

This appendix contains examples of community responses to homelessness. The list is not exhaustive; it describes projects identified during research for this guide. About half the examples listed here are documented more fully in the guide. The other half appear only in this table.

Measuring the homelessness in your community

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Vancouver Walkabouts Vancouver	Volunteers walk around neighbourhoods known to have many individuals who are homeless, and document the number of individuals who are homeless and do not use emergency shelters. On some walkabouts, parts of Vancouver are divided into a grid, with teams reviewing sub-areas. See page 15 Key features: Learning about non-sheltered individuals who are homeless in your community. Useful in municipalities where there are no shelters or to supplement a shelter-based count.	Judy Graves City of Vancouver Phone: 604-873-7488 Fax: 604-871-6048 Email: judy_graves @city.vancouver.bc.ca
• North Shore Homeless Survey North Vancouver	The health authority coordinated a survey of service providers to learn more about the individuals who are homeless on the North Shore. The survey focused on demographics, circumstances, and service needs. See page 15 Key feature: Learning about homeless people in your community. Useful where there are no shelters.	Dr. Brian O'Connor or Erin Black North Shore Health Region Phone: 604-983-6871 Fax: 604-983-6839
• Homeless Counts Calgary and Edmonton	Downtown shelter and non-shelter service providers were surveyed. They reported the number of individuals who are homeless that they served or observed sleeping on the street. Key feature: Learning about homelessness in your community.	Kay Wong City of Calgary, 403-268-5119 Daryl Kreuzer City of Edmonton, 780-496-6027
• Nanaimo SRO Survey Nanaimo	This survey recorded building details such as address and ownership/management information, number of units, vacancies, rents, other charges and number of tenants. Building owners and managers were interviewed. See page 17 Key feature: Learning about the SRO stock.	Alison Millward City of Nanaimo Phone: 250-755-4483 Fax: 250-755-4403
• Survey of SRO Occupants Vancouver	The Main and Hastings Community Development Society surveyed 1,400 SRO occupants. It will provide information on who lives in SROs, features of their units, tenant satisfaction, health issues and income source. See page 17 Key feature: Learning about SRO occupants.	Darren Kitchen Phone: 604-688-5305
• Understanding Homelessness in the Community District of Muskoka, ON	This study to understand the extent of homelessness in Muskoka, a rural Ontario municipality that does not have emergency shelters. Looked at who was using transition houses and motels, rents and incomes, supply issues, needs of vulnerable groups, such as youth, individuals with mental illness, and single parents. It also studied key causes of homelessness in the community. See case study, page 18 Key feature: Learning about homelessness in your community.	Ian Turnbull Phone: 705-645-2100 Ext #334 Fax: 705-645-5319 Email: Iturnbull@muskoka.on.ca

APPENDIX A

Consultation and planning processes

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Port Alberni Non-Profit Housing Association – Cool Waters Port Alberni	As part of a community development process, a community group received two CHI grants from BC Housing to undertake a housing needs assessment and gain community support to build social housing. See case study, page 26 Key feature: Community involvement in planning for housing.	Denny Durocher Phone: 250 720-2136 Fax: 250-720-2137 Email: panpha@island.net www.island.net/~panpha
• Cold/Wet Weather Strategy Lower Mainland	A partnership of service providers, community agencies, health boards, and municipal and provincial government representatives work together to improve the coordination of emergency shelter and related services and increase the number of shelter beds during the winter. Key feature: Multi-Stakeholder Working Group.	BC Housing Phone: 604-433-1711
• Night Shelter for Street Youth Victoria	The YM/YWCA, Red Cross, the Boys and Girls Club, and 4 different churches worked to provide shelter for street youth who do not use shelters. From November 1st to April 30th, each of the agencies provides a safe and secure place where youth can sleep indoors. Two experienced staff and volunteers provide supervision and support each night. Each participating agency shares responsibilities and duties, and contributes resources for staffing. There is no government funding. Key feature: Community development, partnerships and working with youth to meet their shelter needs.	Bill Taylor YM/YWCA Phone: 250-386-7511 Fax: 250-380-1933 Email: bill_taylor@ymca.ca
• Needs Assessment for Emergency Shelter and 2nd Stage Housing Nelson	The Advocacy Centre organized a meeting with community groups, service providers and church groups to discuss the needs for emergency and short stay accommodation. To follow up, groups at the meeting and others not represented filled out a needs assessment survey, as did individuals who are or have been homeless. A housing proposal was developed through HOMES BC – HARH that led to the acquisition of an existing motel. The development includes both second stage housing and a emergency shelter. Key feature: Community development initiative to address the need for emergency and short-term accommodation.	Andrew Earnshaw Phone: 250-352-5777 Fax: 250-352-5723 Judy Gayton Phone: 250-352-7864 Fax: 250-352-6019
• Nanaimo Community Process Nanaimo	A committee with representatives from the City, community and various support ministries and agencies identified local needs through interviews with individuals who had experienced homelessness and agencies that provide services to this population. A public forum held to present findings led to the creation of second stage housing for homeless-at-risk individuals through HOMES BC. Key feature: Municipal-led consultation.	Alison Millward Nanaimo Phone: 250-755-4483 Fax: 250-755-4403

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Consultation and planning processes

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Community Action Plan: Reducing Homelessness in Calgary Calgary	Two years of consultation and research resulted in a plan to reduce homelessness. Individuals who were homeless at the time, or previously homeless, participated actively in focus groups, and as survey respondents, writers and researchers. Key feature: Comprehensive community consultation to prepare an action plan.	Kaye Wong Phone:403-268-5119 (See CMHC, Documentation of Best Practices Addressing Homelessness)
• Sandy Merriman House Victoria	A strong community development process that involved women who were homeless or had low incomes to address their shelter and housing needs. Included a series of public meetings over a six month period, each attended by 35-60 women. An old house was converted to a 15-bed women's shelter and drop-in centre. The construction phase included a training program for women who had been involved in the street or had experienced long-term unemployment. They gained skills and work experience while helping to build the shelter. City provides property tax exemption. Video available Key feature: Community development initiative to address shelter needs of women.	Chris Downing Manager Phone:250-480-1408 Fax: 250-480-1548 (See CMHC, Documentation of Best Practices Addressing Homelessness)

Municipal tools

Initiative	Description	Contact
• City of Kamloops Rooming House Initiative Kamloops	In 1996, the City of Kamloops held open house meetings, established a task force, and created an inventory to learn more about rooming houses. It encouraged owners to bring rooming houses up to basic health and safety standards and to have fire inspections three times a year. The City made it clear that it did not want to shut down the rooming houses. Key features: Inventory and maintenance of rooming houses.	Lenore Mitchell Phone: 250-828-3553 Fax: 250-828-7848 Email: lmitchell@city.kamloops.bc.ca
• The Edge - Affordable Housing in Return for Rezoning Vancouver	As part of the rezoning of industrial land to allow a mixed income, mixed tenure complex with 150 live/work units, the developers entered into a housing agreement and provided the City with 22 units at no cost. The City purchased an additional 8 units. Of these 30, 15 are rented to low-income tenants at the BC Benefits shelter allowance. The other 15 are rented at the low end of market rates. Key features: Affordable housing deeded to the City, to be managed by a non-profit agency, in return for up-zoning.	Jill Davidson Phone: 604-873-7670 Fax:604-871-6048 Email: jill_davidson@city.vancouver.bc.ca

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Municipal tools

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Affordable housing reserve fund Richmond	As part of its affordable housing strategy, the City created an affordable housing reserve fund under section 378 of the **Local Government Act**. Developers of market housing contribute to the fund. Key feature: Municipal affordable housing fund.	Urban Development Division Phone: 604-276-4220
• Affordable Housing Reserve Fund North Vancouver	In 1989, the City of North Vancouver established a reserve fund to support the development of affordable housing on leased City lands. Initially, the fund received allocations from General Revenue on an annual basis, growing with annual accrued interest. More recently Council has directed that a portion of the monies earned from sales and leases of Lower Lonsdale lands accrue to the Fund. The current balance is approximately $1 million and funds have been used to offset the leasehold value for two non-profit housing projects. Key feature: Municipal affordable housing fund.	Cheryl Kathler North Vancouver Phone: 604-983-7380 Fax: 604-985-0576 Email: ckathler@cnv.org

Reducing evictions

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Early Intervention Project Toronto	The City of Toronto provided $25,000 to the Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation for a pilot project to reduce evictions and prevent increased homelessness. Tenants were provided with information and resources to help them maintain their current housing or find alternative accommodation. They were also referred to appropriate services, including the Rent Bank and Shelter Fund. Key features: Reducing evictions and preventing increased homelessness.	Jennifer Ramsay, CERA Phone: 416-944-0087 Ext #23 Fax: 416-944-1803 Email: jramsay@web.net
• Rent Bank Toronto	This initiative provides interest-free loans to low-income families with children who are facing eviction due to unpaid rent. Began as a pilot project from September 1998 to November 1999. An evaluation was completed and the initiative will continue. For a copy of the evaluation contact Susan Bacque: Phone: 416-392-1266, Fax: 416-392-0548 or Email: sbacque@city.toronto.on.ca Key features: Reducing evictions and preventing increased homelessness.	Gladys Wong Neighbourhood Information Post Phone:416-924-2543 Fax: 416-924-8062 Email: nipost@interlog.com

APPENDIX A

Reducing evictions

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Shelter Fund Toronto	The City of Toronto established the Shelter Fund to help families with children that receive income assistance to maintain their current housing or relocate to more affordable housing. Funds are also used to prevent eviction. The Shelter Fund covers the cost of: rental and utility deposits, payment of arrears, necessary household furnishings and moving and storage costs. Assistance is non-repayable. No restrictions limit the number of times a family may access the Shelter Fund. There is no maximum amount of assistance that may be provided. Key features: Reducing evictions and preventing increased homelessness.	Gregorina Iozzo Program Support Manager Social Services Division Phone: 416-397-7905 Fax: 416-397-7969 Email: gregorina_iozzo@metrodesk.metrotor.on.ca
• Eviction Prevention Program: Landlord/Tenant Mediation and Rent Bank State of Connecticut (similar programs operate in other states)	In 1990, in partnership with community-based agencies, the Connecticut Department of Social Services implemented a state-wide eviction prevention program. Mediation services are available to landlords and low-income families where eviction is imminent. Grants are also available to eligible families for unpaid rent. The program is for families who can pay their rent and are having a short-term problem. It is estimated that the program has saved the state $13 million in 5 years. Key feature: Reducing evictions to prevent increased homelessness.	Madelaine Tores Housing Coordinator, Community Mediations Inc., New Haven, Connecticut Phone: 203-782-3500 For similar programs: Helen Seitz, Coordinator, New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Program Phone: 609-633-6204 Mark Trotz, Director of Housing Development, San Francisco Phone: 415-554-2565
• Eviction Prevention Program New York City	The goal is to prevent people from becoming homeless and divert individuals and families from the emergency shelter system. Case workers are responsible for trying to prevent evictions at all costs. Emergency grants are available to assist with rent arrears. Key feature: Reducing evictions to prevent increased homelessness.	Mark Glickson Director of Diversion Services, Human Resources Administration Phone: 212-274-2294

APPENDIX A

Breaking the cycle of homelessness

Initiative	Description	Contact
• Central City Concern (CCC) Portland, Oregon	A continuum of services links housing, chemical dependency treatment, and employment initiatives. Temporary drug and alcohol-free housing is available for homeless people while they participate in this program. A residential treatment program is available for women and mothers with young children who are homeless or pregnant. CCC provides 1,200 units, mostly in SROs, for single individuals and some families. See case study, page 40 Key features: Breaking the cycle of homelessness by providing a continuum of services that address drug addiction, the need for appropriate housing, and employment.	Richard Harris Central City Concern Phone: 503-294-1681 Fax: 503 - 294-4321 Email: richardh@transport.com
• Kiwanis House Society Kamloops	Provides 21 licensed recovery beds (28 days), funded by the provincial government and 10 safe house recovery beds with no provincial funding. More than half of the clients have no fixed address. Rents are $330 per month and cover the operating costs. Tenants may stay up to a year. They are referred to services in the community and assistance is provided to help them move to permanent housing. Key features: Breaking the cycle of homelessness by addressing the underlying issue of chemical dependency.	Marg Marshall Phone: 250-374-6551
• Eva's Phoenix Toronto	A former fire department repair garage was converted to 50 units of second stage housing, using potential tenants as some members of the construction team. The focus is on employment training to get youth who are homeless permanent, stable jobs, and on developing life skills that will enable them to leave the streets and make a permanent break from the cycle of homelessness. While the training component began in 1999, and includes opportunities in the automotive, financial, film, video, recycling, catering and food service industries, the housing was not scheduled to open until June 2000. See case study, page 35. Key features: Breaking the cycle of homelessness through housing and employment; and acquisition and conversion of non-residential building to residential.	Jennifer Morris Phone: 416-364-4716 Fax: 416-364-7533 Email: ephnix@ibm.net
• Portland Hotel Society Vancouver	The Portland Hotel Society serves individuals who have the greatest difficulty in obtaining and maintaining housing. Staff do everything they can to work with the tenants to resolve issues. The society also aims to provide support services on site in a way that meets the needs of tenants. The result is increased stability and a sense of community among the tenants. See case study, page 44 Key feature: Breaking the cycle of homelessness through supportive housing.	Liz Evans Phone: 604-683-0073 Ext #351 Fax: 604-683-6653 Email: liz@portlandhotel.com

APPENDIX A

Non-profit management of SRO hotels and motels

Project Name	Description	Contact
Sunrise and Washington Hotels Vancouver	Two SRO hotels in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside with 144 units were purchased by a non-profit society and upgraded with funding from the CMHC, the provincial government, the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver/ Richmond Health Board. Personal care services are offered on site, and tenants may use Portland Hotel Society services in a nearby hotel. Key features: Preservation and upgrading of existing SROs through purchase and renovation, and partnerships.	Mark Townsend Portland Hotel Society Phone: 250-683-0073 Ext #350 Fax: 250-683-6653
McQuaid Place Prince George	The Jacob's Inn motel was renovated to create 16 self-contained units of housing for low-income single men and women. Tenants must be able to live independently. HOMES BC - LIUS contributed to funding. The society does not provide services itself, but helps tenants link up with community services. Key features: Acquisition of motel and conversion to non-profit management, and preservation of housing for low-income individuals.	Audrey Schwartz Phone:250-563-6112 Fax: 250-563-1612
Metropole Vancouver	In a partnership with a private developer, a community group converted and upgraded an old 64-room hotel into 60 self-contained 200 square foot units. Rents range from $350 to $400. The partnership obtained funding through RRAP. The non-profit society has a focus on tenant employment opportunities. Key features: Acquisition of SRO and conversion to non-profit management, preservation and upgrading of existing SRO, and partnership with the private sector.	Frank Gilbert DERA Phone: 604-682-0931 Fax: 604-669-5499
Nelson District Housing Society Nelson	After conducting a needs assessment, the non-profit society converted an old motel to second stage housing and an emergency shelter. Funding was provided by the Real Estate Foundation of B.C. and the Canadian Mental Health Association, Nelson Branch. The society has applied for funding from HOMES BC - HARH and RRAP (no decisions made). It approached the health authority to rent two units on an annual basis for out-of-town patients coming to Nelson for special services. Key features: Acquisition of a motel and conversion to non-profit ownership.	Joan Reichardt, Secretary Nelson District Housing Society Phone and Fax: 250-825-4791
Regal Hotel Vancouver	A housing society worked in partnership with the health authority to purchase and upgrade an existing SRO hotel in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Management has been contracted to the Portland Hotel Society. Tradeworks, an organization that employs people from the neighbourhood, completed renovations. See case study, page 50. Key features: Acquisition and conversion to non-profit ownership, preservation and upgrading of existing SROs; partnerships, and employment training opportunities for youth.	Garry Charles Greater Vancouver Housing Commission Phone: 604-432-6300 Fax: 604-436-6960

APPENDIX A

Non-profit management of SRO hotels and motels

Project Name	Description	Contact
The Lighthouse Kamloops	A 2-storey motel was renovated by the John Howard Society as 18 supportive housing units for lower income singles. Development funding was provided through HOMES BC. See case study, page 54. Key feature: Acquisition of existing building, renovation and conversion to non-profit management.	Dawn Hrycun John Howard Society Phone: 250-374-3844 Fax: 250-374-3842 Email: johnhoward_society @telus.net
The Hampton Hotel Vancouver	In 1991, a group of business partners purchased the 50-room SRO hotel in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside and leased it to the Mental Patients' Association (MPA) to provide management and support services for tenants with mental illnesses. Rent, set at the BC Benefits shelter allowance, covered the lease payments. The Ministry of Health (now Vancouver Richmond Health Board) provided operational funding for 22.5 hours/week of staffing for the hotel. In 1998, MPA purchased the building. Financing for the purchase includes a conventional mortgage, a second mortgage with one of the partners, and a second mortgage on another of the society's buildings. The tenant rent contribution covers the mortgage payments. Key features: Acquisition of existing building for individuals with mental illness.	Barry Niles Mental Patients' Association Phone: 604-738-2811
Mediwiwin Victoria	A motel was redeveloped to 16 housing units for people who were chronically homeless. Most tenants have a mental illness and/or are dual diagnosed. 80% of the tenants have been there for 4 years. Mediwiwin is tenant managed. Tenants make the rules and are paid $10/hour for maintenance. Key features: Strong community development process at project initiation, acquisition of existing building, tenant management and peer support model.	Aaron Murray Coordinator Phone: 250-480-5151
Calgary Homeless Foundation Calgary	Buildings are purchased and upgraded through funding from the Alberta government, City of Calgary, RRAP and private donations. The renovated buildings are turned over to a non-profit agency as housing for individuals and families who are homeless. The foundation also provides interest-free loans to help individuals and families who are working and homeless secure permanent housing. In Calgary, many individuals who are homeless have jobs; they do not have a place to live. Key feature: Partnerships with provincial government, City and private sector to address homelessness.	Kay Wong City of Calgary Phone: 403-268-5119

APPENDIX A

Preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing

Project Name	Description	Contact
Mole Hill Vancouver	In a large renovation initiative, housing built in the 1800s and 1900s is being upgraded to provide affordable housing to a mix of low-income families and individuals. Phase 1 involves 10 houses and will provide 68 units. Phase 2 will involve 16 houses and is expected to provide more than 100 units. The majority will be self-contained bachelor and one-bedroom units. The City currently owns the land and buildings. As properties are renovated, the City will transfer ownership to the Mole Hill Community Society through a 60 year lease. BC Housing is providing funding for the renovations and for subsidies to low income households. Key feature: Preservation and upgrading of existing affordable rental housing.	Blair Petrie Mole Hill Living Heritage Society Phone: 604-681-2096
Tenants Non-Profit Redevelopment Co-operative Toronto	A land trust and resource group formed in 1989 to help tenants purchase and upgrade their building and convert it to a co-operative. Renovated buildings are put into the land trust. Key features: Preservation and upgrading of existing affordable housing stock. Purchase of building by tenants.	Phone: 416-537-0909 Fax: 416-537-1878
Community Revitalization Winnipeg	Two inner-city neighbourhoods will begin a community-driven revitalization process to increase community stability. Many single-detached homes have been converted to rooming houses in response to the lack of affordable housing. In the designated area, more than 60% of the residents are renters. More than half pay more than 30% of their incomes to rent. Many are dependent on food banks. The City is providing funding to kick-start this initiative. They are also planning to use RRAP funding to upgrade properties to meet minimum health and safety standards. Key feature: Community revitalization to promote stability among low-income households.	Linda Ring Neighbourhood Planner City of Winnipeg Phone: 204-986-4560 Fax: 204-986-7524
Rooming House Response Team Ottawa	The Rooming House Response Team (RHRT), established in 1996, is a joint initiative between the City of Ottawa and Housing Help, a community agency. Goals are to help maintain rooming houses as a viable option for low income individuals and to mediate conflicts that occur. The RHRT consists of the Coordinator, a community worker and the local City councillor. Other city departments, including the police, fire, zoning and property standards, and community agencies, such as mental health or addictions, participate as needed. The team works closely with landlords, tenants, neighbours, and other community members. The Rooming House Coordinator and the Rooming House Community Worker act as a central conduit for complaints. They offer conflict resolution services, as well as general support, information and referrals to various resources and services. Key feature: Helping to maintain rooming houses as a successful option for low-income individuals.	Craig Defries City of Ottawa Phone: 613-244-5300 Ext #3993 Fax: 613-244-5601 Email: defriesc@city.ottawa.on.ca

APPENDIX A

New construction

Project Name	Description	Contact
Chrysalis House Elk Valley Family Society Fernie	11 units of 2nd stage housing funded through the HOMES BC - HARH component provide safe and affordable housing for women leaving abusive relationships or homes. Referrals are sometimes made from emergency shelters and safe houses. The City of Fernie assisted in the purchase of the land. Key feature: Development of 2nd stage housing.	Corrie Hurlburt Phone: 250-423-4213 Fax: 250-423-4179 Email: evfs@elkvalley.net
Pandora Project Victoria	32 apartments for adults with physical disabilities or mental illness are partly funded by HOMES BC - HARH. 8 additional units of transition housing for youth are managed by the YM/YWCA. There is also an activity centre. Key feature: Development of housing for hard-to-house individuals. Includes activity centre and transitional housing for youth.	John Crean Victoria Cool Aid Society Phone: 250-383-0064 Harold Brown YM/YWCA Phone: 250-380-2663
Nelson Youth Housing Nelson	10 apartments for 16-22 year olds are funded under HOMES BC - HARH component. The goal is to assist youth in crisis to develop the necessary life skills to live independently. Key feature: Development of housing for youth.	Joyce Dahms-Whiffem Coordinator of Youth Services Phone: 250-352-9595 Fax: 250-352-9907
CMHA Cranbrook	23 supportive housing units funded under HOMES BC - HARH were occupied in May 2000. A model is being developed that will involve support funding from a variety of ministries, agencies and private sector. More than one tenant group is served. Key features: Model for providing support services for different client groups and using different sources of funding.	Janis Bradshaw CMHA Phone: 250-426-5222 Fax: 250-426-2134
Seymour Project Vancouver	136 units for independent living, including up to 30 for individuals with mental illness and 15 for individuals who are HIV positive. The 1st and 2nd floors will provide space for a mental health drop-in centre. The Coast Foundation is raising $1.5 million for the centre. Key features: Different partners and fundraising.	Bob Nicklin Affordable Housing Soc. Phone: 604-521-0818 Heather Edgar Coast Foundation Phone: 604-872-3502
Tonto Rosette House Victoria	4 units that provide permanent housing for First Nations individuals. The house has a carving room and other culturally linked facilities and programs. Neighbours are supportive. Key feature: Impact of housing on tenants.	Linda Ross M'Akola Housing Phone: 250-384-1423 Fax: 250-381-1438
St. Vincent de Paul Victoria	43 units are being developed for low income individuals. The society's mandate is to serve individuals with addictions and mental illnesses. The society worked with the City of Victoria. Key feature: Process for a group to develop housing.	Angela Elliot Phone: 250-727-0808

New construction . . . cont'd

Project Name	Description	Contact
Bruce Erikson Vancouver	An 8-storey building with ground-floor retail was developed on city-owned land with a large capital grant from a defunct provincial government program. Key features:Funding through a capital grant; City leased land.	Kathleen Boyes or Darren Kitchen Phone: 604-688-5305
New Portland Hotel Vancouver	87 self-contained units funded by many partners are being developed on city-leased land. The focus is on management. See Portland Hotel case study, page 44 Key feature: Funding partnerships.	Mark Townsend Portland Hotel Society Phone:604-683-0073 Ext.#350 Fax: 604-683-6653
Hydrecs House Vancouver	A 9-unit energy-efficient apartment building was developed jointly by Coast Foundation and B.C. Schizophrenia Society on city-leased land with no on-going subsidies. Key feature: Method of financing.	Heather Edgar Coast Foundation Phone: 604-872-3502
VanCity Place for Youth Vancouver	50 units for street-involved youth were developed on city land. Major donations were provided for 70% of the project costs. There are no on-going subsidies. Key features: Fundraising and City grant of $2 million for construction costs and the land.	Dale McClanaghan VanCity Enterprises Phone: 604-877-7546
Mike Gidora Place – small suites Victoria	This small suites development has 40 studio units of 200 square feet with storage loft and 5 one-bedroom 450-square-foot units with a storage loft. 12-foot ceilings and large windows create a greater sense of space. There are several funding partners. See case study, page 60 Key feature: Small suites.	Jane Dewing Victoria Cool Aid Society Phone: 250-383-1977 Fax: 250-383-1639

APPENDIX A

Emergency shelters

Project Name	Description	Contact
Abraham's Lodge Williams Lake	Boarding home for 23 individuals is operated by a number of First Nations bands from the area around Williams Lake. Most tenants are First Nations. Some tenants have special needs or have been involved in the justice system. The facility also has an emergency shelter and in the winter can serve as many as 20 additional people. Key feature: Shelter for individuals who are chronically homeless.	Sarah Stump or Jacob Boy O Marule Phone: 250-398-7740
Hazelwood Hotel and Lookout Emergency Shelter Vancouver	In a partnership, the private owner of the Hazelwood Hotel and Lookout Emergency Shelter provide transitional housing for shelter users. Lookout provides support staff on site at the hotel. Key features: Minimal barrier shelter and partnership with a nearby hotel.	Karen O'Shannacery Lookout Emergency Shelter Phone: 604-255-0340
Triage Vancouver	An emergency shelter has 28 units of transitional housing. A non-profit society helps individuals adjust to housing in surrounding SRO hotels. Key feature: Minimal barrier shelter that serves individuals with a mental illness and/or alcohol and drug addiction.	Mark Smith Phone: 604-254-3700
Quebec Street Emergency Shelter Prince George	This emergency shelter serves mostly adult women, and occasionally serves female youth and mothers with children. Tenants often have difficulty accessing community resources. Few women are barred from the shelter. In the winter of 1999-2000, services were expanded to include a minimal barrier shelter for women who are intoxicated or otherwise difficult to serve. Key feature: Low-barrier shelter for women.	Marianne Sorenson Phone: 250-562-6262
Peggy's Place Vancouver	10 beds of emergency housing are provided for women who have a mental illness and who are leaving abusive relationships or homes. The non-profit society receives funding from the Ministry of Women's Equality and the Vancouver Richmond Health Board. Key feature: Emergency shelter for women with mental illness leaving abusive relationships.	Nancy Keough Kettle Friendship Society, Phone: 604-251-9828
Streetlink Victoria	A multi-service 55-bed shelter for men and women assists tenants who are in a cycle of homelessness and eviction. Many have a mental illness and have misused substances. Streetlink clients volunteer in the kitchen, provide maintenance services, and help with chores such as laundry. The shelter has links with the Swift Street Medical Clinic, housing services, and youth and women's shelters. Key feature: Tenant involvement in shelter service.	Jane Dewing Victoria Cool Aid Society Phone: 250-383-1977 Fax: 250-383-1639

Emergency shelters . . . cont'd

Project Name	Description	Contact
Covenant House Vancouver	An 18-bed shelter serving 19 to 22 year-olds provides three meals a day, recreational outings, and daily contact with workers. Tenants may stay indefinitely, as long as they are working on a plan to secure permanent housing. Services also include a crisis intervention centre, food, shelter, clothing, counselling, medical and social service referrals, educational/vocational preparation, drug misuse treatment, legal services and street outreach. Key feature: Youth shelter.	Sandy Cooke Phone: 604-685-7474
Kiwanis Emergency Youth Shelter (KEYS) Victoria	A 24-hour shelter serves 10 youth age 13-18. Tenants must leave the shelter during the day. Parents, social workers, school counselors, police, substance abuse counselors, housing agencies, and crisis intervention teams all work collaboratively to address immediate and long term needs of clients and their families. Key feature: Shelter for 13-18 year olds.	Jane Dewing Victoria Cool Aid Society Phone: 250-383-1977 Fax: 250-383-1639
Eva's Satellite Toronto	A 40-bed alternate shelter for 16 to 24 year-olds has flexible rules and limited demands, attracting youth who would not normally use the shelter system. The immediate focus is to provide a safe environment. The non-profit society received funding to develop a harm reduction model. Key feature: Harm reduction approach in a youth shelter.	Sue Goodfellow Phone: 416-441-1414 Fax: 416-441-4130

APPENDIX B

B.C. shelter snapshot survey

November 19, 1999

This appendix provides demographic information on individuals using emergency shelters on November 19, 1999. The information was gathered as part of the homeless research that the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security initiated to learn more about individuals who are homeless. Since individuals who use emergency shelters may vary on a day-to-day basis, the snapshot may have shown a different picture on the previous or following nights. However, it gives a broad picture of individuals experiencing homelessness at that time.

The snapshot includes shelters throughout the province, including the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island, the North and the Interior. Information was recorded by organizations and societies operating emergency shelters. It does not include information on individuals who are homeless – on the street, in parks, under bridges – and are literally without shelter.

Table B-1: B.C. shelter clients (n=614) on Nov. 19, 1999

Gender	Percent	Ethnicity	Percent
Male	78%	Caucasian	66%
Female	21%	Aboriginal	19%
Other/no answer	0%	Asian	3%
Total	100%	Other	6%
		No answer	6%
Age	Percent	**Total**	100%
Under 19	9%		
19-24	11%	Reasons for Admission	Percent
25-34	23%	Out of funds	24%
35-44	29%	Substance misuse	14%
45-54	16%	Evicted	12%
55-64	6%	Just moved/visiting	11%
65+	5%	Family breakdown	10%
Total	100%	From hospital	4%
		Stranded	3%
Family Status	Percent	From jail	2%
Single	86%	Spousal abuse	2%
Couple	3%	Fire/safety	1%
Family with children	7%	Refugee	0%
No answer	3%	Parental abuse	0%
Total	100%	Other	6%
		No answer	9%
		Total	100%

Table B-1: B.C. shelter clients (n=614) on Nov. 19, 1999 . . . cont'd

Major Source of Income	Percent
Income assistance	52%
None	20%
Disability benefit	6%
Employment	4%
Pension	3%
Other	3%
Income assistance and other	1%
No answer/not known	12%
Total	100%

When Last Permanent Address	Percent
< 6 Months	67%
6 to 12 months	14%
> 1 year	10%
No answer	8%
Total	100%

Health Condition (visible) (may answer in more than one category)	Percent
Physical disability	9%
Mental illness	22%
Medical condition	17%
Substance misuse	32%
Substance misuse and mental illness	10%
None or no answer	45%

Source: Snapshot survey, November 19th, 1999.

Proportion of renters at risk of homelessness due to severe affordability problems

This appendix shows the proportion of renter households paying 50% or more of their income to rent in 1996 in B.C. municipalities, as well as the change in proportion between 1991 and 1996.

Municipality	% of households paying 50% or more of their income to rent	Change in percentage of rental households paying 50% or more of their income on rent between 1991 and 1996	Municipality	% of households paying 50% or more of their income to rent	Change in percentage of rental house holds paying 50% or more of their income on rent between 1991 and 1996
British Columbia	24%	6%	Gold River	11%	-5%
100 Mile House	26%	3%	Golden	22%	6%
Abbotsford	22%	23%	Grand Forks	19%	15%
Alert Bay	25%	25%	Granisle	38%	32%
Anmore	25%	25%	Greenwood	33%	12%
Armstrong	25%	5%	Harrison Hot Springs	14%	0%
Ashcroft	9%	0%			
Belcarra	0%	0%	Hazelton	18%	6%
Burnaby	23%	7%	Highlands	13%	13%
Cache Creek	17%	-3%	Hope	33%	14%
Campbell River	24%	6%	Houston	14%	1%
Castlegar	19%	3%	Hudson's Hope	33%	18%
Central Saanich	15%	0%	Invermere	17%	2%
Chase	23%	1%	Kamloops	29%	10%
Chetwynd	26%	17%	Kaslo	26%	6%
Chilliwack	29%	10%	Kelowna	26%	9%
Clinton	32%	22%	Kent	21%	4%
Coldstream	25%	-1%	Keremeos	20%	1%
Colwood	11%	3%	Kimberley	15%	4%
Comox	15%	-3%	Kitimat	22%	8%
Coquitlam	25%	9%	Ladysmith	19%	10%
Courtenay	31%	10%	Lake Country	22%	22%
Cranbrook	27%	10%	Lake Cowichan	21%	-1%
Creston	17%	2%	Langford	29%	29%
Cumberland	41%	16%	Langley, City of	24%	5%
Dawson Creek	21%	5%	Langley, Township of	16%	1%
Delta	19%	3%			
Duncan	26%	8%	Lillooet	22%	-1%
Elkford	10%	10%	Lions Bay	23%	23%
Enderby	26%	6%	Logan Lake	20%	20%
Esquimalt	22%	5%	Lumby	8%	-8%
Fernie	14%	8%	Lytton	0%	-15%
Fort Nelson	18%	9%	Mackenzie	12%	6%
Fort St. John	18%	5%	Maple Ridge	28%	6%
Fort St. James	7%	1%	Masset	5%	-3%
Fraser Lake	23%	5%	McBride	50%	38%
Fruitvale	11%	0%	Merritt	35%	15%
Gibsons	36%	23%	Midway	33%	33%

Proportion of renters at risk of homelessness due to severe affordability problems . . . cont'd

Municipality	% of households paying 50% or more of their income to rent	Change in percentage of rental households paying 50% or more of their income on rent between 1991 and 1996
Mission	28%	29%
Montrose	0%	0%
North Vancouver, City of	23%	5%
North Vancouver, District of	17%	4%
Nakusp	12%	6%
Nanaimo	30%	5%
Nelson	32%	14%
New Denver	24%	8%
New Hazelton	0%	-22%
New Westminster	23%	5%
North Cowichan	27%	7%
North Saanich	15%	1%
Oak Bay	19%	3%
Oliver	20%	7%
Osoyoos	14%	1%
Parksville	32%	16%
Peachland	34%	24%
Pemberton	28%	16%
Penticton	27%	10%
Pitt Meadows	16%	1%
Port Alberni	29%	10%
Port Alice	15%	10%
Port Clements	0%	0%
Port Coquitlam	22%	7%
Port Edward	29%	29%
Port Hardy	24%	15%
Port McNeill	11%	-4%
Port Moody	20%	9%
Pouce Coupe	18%	18%
Powell River	31%	9%
Prince George	23%	7%
Prince Rupert	20%	6%
Princeton	23%	11%
Qualicum Beach	24%	11%
Quesnel	23%	5%
Radium Hot Springs	0%	-25%
Revelstoke	17%	5%
Richmond	20%	5%
Rossland	15%	6%
Saanich	23%	6%
Salmo	23%	14%
Salmon Arm	23%	7%
Sayward	0%	0%
Sechelt	18%	1%
Sicamous	22%	3%
Sidney	23%	5%
Silverton	0%	0%
Slocan	0%	-50%
Smithers	11%	-3%
Spallumcheen	11%	-6%
Sparwood	19%	13%
Squamish	19%	2%
Stewart	0%	-5%
Summerland	25%	11%
Surrey	27%	8%
Tahsis	0%	0%
Taylor	11%	-6%
Telkwa	0%	0%
Terrace	19%	4%
Tofino	10%	5%
Trail	24%	14%
Tumbler Ridge	2%	0%
Ucluelet	9%	-3%
Valemount	36%	15%
Vancouver	25%	6%
Vanderhoof	20%	3%
Vernon	31%	12%
Victoria	26%	3%
View Royal	19%	9%
Warfield	8%	3%
West Vancouver	22%	2%
Whistler	18%	4%
White Rock	22%	3%
Williams Lake	24%	8%
Zeballos	0%	-33%

Source: BC Housing, based on 1996 Census data

Checklist for developing a comprehensive strategy to address homelessness

☐ Organizations concerned with homelessness have been contacted and invited to participate. This could include community agencies, local government, health authorities, and senior government. NOTES:

☐ Local information about homelessness and low cost rental housing stock has been identified, assembled, and analyzed. NOTES:

☐ Broad community consultation has occurred, focussing on community needs, resources and priorities.
NOTES:

☐ Potential initiatives to reduce evictions have been identified and discussed.
NOTES:

☐ Potential initiatives to preserve or upgrade existing low rent housing have been identified and discussed. NOTES:

☐ Potential initiatives to create new low rent housing have been identified and discussed.
NOTES:

☐ The initiative is part of an overall strategy to reduce homelessness that integrates emergency shelter services, support services and initiatives to promote permanent housing. NOTES:

☐ Intended outputs and outcomes have been identified, and an evaluation strategy has been developed. NOTES:

☐ Examples from other jurisdictions have been identified, studied and adapted to suit local needs. NOTES:

☐ Prospective funding partners have been identified and approached.
NOTES:

Steps to organizing a public forum

STEP 1: Establish a core planning group

Identify key people and organizations to plan and co-sponsor the event. At an initial meeting, discuss the possibilities for the forum title, objectives, format, resource people, facilitators, participants that could be invited, and membership in the planning team.

STEP 2: Establish clear goals

The core planning team should agree on the purpose of the forum.
Members should agree on:

- well-defined objectives (e.g. "to identify ideas for preventing homelessness")
- terms of reference
- scope of influence (e.g. recommendations to member organizations for further action)
- an overall process design (if further steps beyond the forum are planned)
- content to be included in a final report.

STEP 3: Create a detailed event plan

The core planning team should agree on all details, including:

- date(s) and time(s), location, format and agenda(s)
- who to invite
- publicity
- logistics (pre-registration, refreshments, equipment, handouts, and any display materials).

The public forum agenda should provide enough time for participation and interaction. Breaking into smaller groups provides opportunities for participants to provide input and may be more comfortable for people who don't enjoy speaking in large groups.

STEP 4: Coordinate resource people and facilitators

People who are giving presentations should be informed about the objectives of the forum and what is required of them. Presentations often go on longer than planned, so if you want a 15-minute presentation ask for a 10-minute one. Small group facilitators should be provided with clear written instructions about what they are expected to do. For example, instructions might say to "record whole phrases/sentences on the flip chart," to avoid difficulties in understanding the notes later. It is often helpful to have a brief orientation session or "huddle" with facilitators just prior to a forum to clarify expectations.

STEP 5: Hold the forum(s)

Good planning of forums is relatively easy. Make sure that there is good signage to direct people to the room. Participants should be welcomed as they come in. They should be given name tags and a copy of the agenda as they register. If people are randomly assigned to small discussion groups, name tags can be coded with a number or colour to indicate the group.

At the end of the forum, ask the participants to fill out a simple evaluation sheet to indicate what people found useful and considerations for future events. As part of the closing remarks, participants should be informed about the next steps and the scheduled time frame.

Steps to organizing a public forum . . . cont'd

STEP 6: Follow up.
Notes from the forum(s) should be compiled and promptly distributed to participants and other interested parties. These notes should clearly document small group discussions. In some cases, making a commitment to distribute notes can be an alternative to detailed reporting back by each group.

Action should be taken. For example, if the forum identified the need for an ongoing working group, this committee should be established. If recommendations were developed at the forum, they should be sent to the person or organization which may be able to act on the recommendation.

CHECK LIST FOR FORUMS, MEETINGS, and OPEN HOUSES

- ☐ Key individuals/agencies are involved in the planning
- ☐ Objectives of the session(s) have been clearly stated
- ☐ Date(s) and time(s) are convenient for intended participants
- ☐ Location and building are accessible for all participants
- ☐ Barriers, such as transportation and child care, have been considered
- ☐ Invitations and/or advertising give enough advance notice
- ☐ Detailed agenda has been prepared
- ☐ Evaluation form has been prepared
- ☐ Rooms to be used have been checked for size
- ☐ Planned layout of tables/chairs fit with the format
- ☐ Appropriate refreshment options have been arranged
- ☐ Facilitators and resource people have been selected
- ☐ Facilitators and resource people have been clearly informed of their tasks
- ☐ Necessary audio visual equipment (including extension cords)and/or flip charts have been reserved
- ☐ Display materials and handouts have been prepared
- ☐ Name tags have been prepared, or will be prepared at registration
- ☐ Registration materials have been assembled, including extra name tags, sign in sheets, etc.
- ☐ Flip chart materials have been assembled (paper, markers, tape)
- ☐ Site signage has been prepared, if necessary
- ☐ Time has been allotted for checking equipment and assembling materials before the event

APPENDIX F

Some useful websites

B.C. Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security	www.sdes.gov.bc.ca
BC Housing	www.bchousing.org
BC Stats	www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, National Office (CMHC British Columbia and Yukon region can be accessed through this web site)	www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca
Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD)	www.ccsd.ca
Canadian Housing and Renewal Association	www.chra-achru.ca
Housing Again (A Toronto based site dedicated to putting affordable housing back on the public agenda)	www.housingagain.web.net
Raising the Roof (A national charity dedicated to finding long-term solutions to homelessness in Canada)	www.raisingtheroof.org
Statistics Canada	www.statcan.ca
US Dept of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)	www.hud.gov
(For information about continuum of care planning)	http://www.hud.gov/cpd/cont/gcoc.html

Resource group

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- Cheryl Kathler, City of North Vancouver
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- Wendy Zink, City of Victoria

Glossary

Absolute homelessness

The United Nations has defined absolute homelessness as individuals living with no physical shelter – including people living on the streets, in doorways or parkades, in parks or on beaches, in their vehicles and youth squatting in vacant buildings. Being absolutely homeless is also referred to as being shelterless.

At risk of becoming homeless

People are considered at risk of homelessness because they pay too much of their income for rent and/or live in unsafe, inadequate or insecure housing. Often, these people are one step away from homelessness. Many of those living in single room occupancy (SRO) hotels, motels and rooming houses are among those at risk of homelessness. Others considered at risk of homelessness are people doubling up with others or 'couch surfing' (temporarily staying with friends).

Bricks and mortar

The physical components of a housing development are considered the bricks and mortar. This includes the structure as well as design features to increase the accessibility and adaptability. Bricks and mortar does not encompass support or social services included in a housing development.

Community capacity

Community capacity is the ability of a community, including local authorities, community agencies, non-profit societies and individuals to initiate and plan a response to homelessness and assemble the necessary resources. This includes enhancing the effectiveness of communities to develop a response, building knowledge and sustaining efforts. In addition, community capacity includes inviting participation from a broad section of the community, enabling persons to participate and creating a purpose for involvement.

Cycle of homelessness

People living in crisis poverty often cycle between having housing and being homeless. Homelessness tends to be a transient or episodic disruption in lives that are routinely marked by hardship. For such people, use of shelters or other makeshift accommodations is simply another way of bridging a temporary gap in resources. The cycle may be coupled with poor employment prospects, family violence, disabilities or illness. Persistent poverty is the major factor that turns unforeseen crises, or even minor setbacks, into bouts of homelessness.

Emergency shelter

Emergency shelters provide shared bedrooms or dorm type sleeping arrangements with accommodation for up to one month. Some shelters offer a higher level of support to individuals. This is accomplished with additional sources of funding, either through other government agencies or fund raising. Some shelters have individual or dedicated single bedrooms. Families with children are served through emergency shelters, motels or similar accommodations. Emergency shelters are also referred to as hostels.

Enhanced building management

Increased building maintenance and security characterize enhanced building management. In housing developments for individuals who are hard to house, it is recognized that more time and resources are required in managing the housing units/buildings. For example, additional wear and tear on the physical building may require increased maintenance. Building security may include items such as video cameras.

Evidence-based research

Evidence-based research integrates individual expertise with the best available external evidence from systematic research.

Homeless/At Risk Housing (HARH)

Homeless/At Risk Housing (HARH) is the provincial government's component of the HOMES BC program which provides housing for individuals who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. HARH has been expanded on a pilot basis to include projects that combine second stage housing and emergency shelter beds within a single development or building. This approach increases flexibility for communities to respond to a wider range of housing needs among persons who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

Hard to house

Individuals who are hard to house include individuals of all ages who for a variety of reasons have demonstrated difficulty in maintaining stable housing, and who are at risk of becoming or remaining homeless because of their situation or vulnerabilities. Many of the individuals within this group have mental and/or physical health problems and may alternate between living on the street and in emergency shelters. Individuals may also be considered hard to house because of particular behaviors or because of the lack of social skills that are difficult for housing providers or other tenants to deal with. Some individuals may be considered hard to house because of a lack of appropriate housing options and/or services gaps within a particular community.

Health authorities

Health authorities includes regional health boards, regional health districts, health societies and health councils created under the **Health Authorities Act** to develop policies, set priorities and allocate resources for the delivery of health services under a regional health plan. Health authorities may enter into agreements with the government or other public or private organizations for the delivery of services.

HOMES BC

HOMES BC, the provincially-funded housing program, assists communities in addressing their affordable housing needs. HOMES BC, administered by BC Housing, provides construction loans and on-going operating subsidies to support non-profit and co-op housing providers in the development of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income British Columbians. Since HOMES BC began in 1994, the provincial government has approved funding for more than 4,100 housing units and announced funding for an additional 2,400 housing units.

Informed consent

Informed consent is a person's agreement to allow something to happen, made with full knowledge of the risks involved and the alternatives. Prior to requesting individual personal information, informed consent requires that you must make an individual aware of the reason why their personal information is being collected, how that information will be used and who the information will be disclosed to.

Lower Income Urban Singles (LIUS)
Lower income urban singles (LIUS) include the working poor, persons on income assistance and pensioners. Many singles battling poverty and unemployment often compounded with alcohol and/or drug addiction and physical and/or mental illness, are living in housing that is both over-priced and inadequate, putting those individuals in unstable and precarious living conditions. Housing options are generally limited substandard housing options such as motels, hotels, rooming houses or basement apartments. Lower income urban singles make up a large percentage of the relatively homeless population.

Local government tools
Local government tools include policies, by-laws, practices and procedures adopted by local government to assist and encourage the development of affordable housing.

Market housing
Market housing is private home ownership and rental housing that is supplied by the private market without direct government assistance. Individuals, corporations, and pension funds own market housing as a form of savings, generating income or capital gains.

Market rates for rent
The market rate for rent is the rate of rent for private market rental apartments. The rate of rent reflects amortization, taxes, operating expenses, reserves and profit on investment as well as local supply and demand conditions.

Municipality
Municipalities are a level of government created under the **Local Government Act**. Municipalities levy and collect real property taxes and have the power to pass bylaws concerning a wide range of matters including community planning and development, land use control and zoning. Neighbouring municipalities address collective issues through their membership in regional districts.

NIMBY (Not in my backyard)
A term commonly used to describe community or individual resistance to development in order to prevent real or perceived negative impacts. Affordable housing developments are often subject to NIMBY campaigns by neighbours and community members. Overcoming NIMBY requires discussing concerns and finding middle ground and new practical working relationships between local goals and imperatives.

Non-Profit housing
Non-profit housing is usually owned by societies incorporated under the **Society Act**. Non-profit housing is designed to provide affordable housing for people whose incomes, age, social or health needs prevent them from finding adequate housing in the private rental market. Under the provincial regulations, directors and managers of a non-profit corporation cannot profit from the activities of the organization. Non-profit housing providers may be involved in some or all aspects of the housing development, such as construction, ownership and operation of housing for low and moderate income residents.

GLOSSARY

Regional district

Regional districts are a level of government empowered under the **Local Government Act** to provide, at the request of their members, services to municipalities and unincorporated areas within their boundaries. Services related to the development of affordable housing may include planning, land banking and subdivision development. Municipalities, while members of regional districts, maintain their own authority.

Relative homelessness

According to the United Nations, relative homelessness includes those living in spaces that do not meet basic health and safety standards, including protection from the elements, security of tenure, personal safety and affordability. This group includes individuals who rely on emergency shelters and hostels for accommodation, although some may be among the absolute homeless as well. The relative homeless includes the thousands of lower income single persons in B.C. living in substandard SRO hotels, motels and rooming houses.

Residential Tenancy Act

This B.C. statute defines the relationship between a landlord and tenant for residential purposes. This legislation includes default terms, which applies to residential agreements throughout the province whether specified in a tenancy agreement or not.

Second stage housing

Second stage housing assists individuals in making the transition between shelters and permanent housing. It allows an individual to begin to address their situation in a safe, secure and comfortable place to live. Access to supports such as personal counselling, job training, job placement and other adult living programs are often offered in second stage housing. Second stage housing may be focussed towards individuals with addictions, women leaving abusive relationships, youth, or individuals with a mental illness.

SRO (Single Room Occupancy)

Single room occupancy refers to hotels, motels, and rooming houses, which are rented on a weekly or monthly basis. Many hotels have bars. SROs typically have a single furnished room with shared spaces and facilities including bathrooms and kitchens. Unlike conventional apartments, the individual rooms are not self-sufficient. SROs are at risk of loss due to redevelopment, fire, conversion to tourist hotels/ student hostels and closure due to physical deterioration.

Supportive housing

Supportive housing, used in the context of this planning guide, is housing combined with services that help tenants maintain greater stability in their lives and live independently. Supportive housing bridges the gap between fully independent living in the community and institutional care. Services may include counselling, health therapies, recreation services, meal preparation and house keeping.

Transition houses

Transition houses provide temporary housing in a safe, secure environment for women and their children leaving abusive relationships or persons leaving addictions treatment. Transition house include safe houses operated in private family homes and government funded shelters. Persons stay in transition housing while making the change to permanent, stable housing.